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Promoting critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for sustainable development in Africa: How to design and implement an effective response by education and training systems

Sub-theme 1
Common core skills for lifelong learning and sustainable development in Africa

**Reaching out to the Educationally Disadvantaged Learner in Africa,
with Particular Reference to the Nigerian Case**

*A contribution to the ADEA Triennial
of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and the ADEA Peer Review Teams*

by
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Working Document

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Abstract

1. A Peer Review exercise carried out in Nigeria revealed that a significant number of marginalized children, youth and adolescents were not benefiting from their Right to Education. The review also observed that the Nigerian situation was common to several other African countries. Poverty, wars, internal conflicts, adverse climatic conditions, cultural/social stigmatizations, uneven distribution of education services, irrelevant curricula, inappropriate classroom practices, weak administration and poor funding were some of the reasons producing and sustaining disadvantage in education. Considerable challenges to effectively address their needs are still not met.
2. Through the analysis of the programs aimed at addressing the educationally disadvantaged learner (EDL) in six sampled African countries, as well as the recommendations emanating from the peer reviews, this study explores ways to provide education and training for sustainable development to the disadvantaged learners in Africa. Using a combination of comparative and case study approaches, it explores the needs of the EDL, identifies pertinent initiatives undertaken to address them, and discusses lessons to learn from this.
3. Three findings clearly standout from the study:
 - EDL socioeconomic and physical needs are so varied that diversification, flexibility, and adaptability are key to effectively developing education, training and empowerment programs for them. Mainstreaming strategies could be implemented wherever possible but out-of-school pathways must be privileged in cases where the EDLs have specific socioeconomic requirements that could not be accommodated within ordinary settings. In all cases, enabling on-site learning environments coupled with the judicious choice of teaching and learning languages and strategies, effective leadership and management play a pivotal role in the empowerment of the EDLs.
 - There is a need to redefine and better use alternative education which should not be just about developing a path to mainstream the unreached, but also about exploring and integrating a full range of vocational offerings and livelihood activities that are robust, relevant, flexible and adapted to contemporary settings;
 - Funding for the disadvantaged is as critical: the “EFA/MDG Revolution” has resulted into a significant increase of student populations, which has significant aftermath impact on the availability of resources, teaching staff, infrastructure and equipment. Therefore, the tendency has been to care for the many and neglect specific programs that deal with smaller entities such as EDL. This trend must be corrected.
4. Based on the findings, alternative policies have been proposed at the end of the report for consideration by national/international policy makers including countries to consider working collaboratively in identifying establishing and implementing appropriate mechanisms for reaching out to the disadvantaged learner through such mechanisms as the Inter-Country Quality Node approach. There is an urgent need for a paradigm shift as in a significant number of cases education must be taken to the EDLs rather than asking them to come towards traditional educational settings. A lot is at stake for anything else.

Foreword

5. This report on “Reaching out to the Educationally Disadvantaged Groups in Africa, with Particular Reference to the Nigerian Case” is commissioned by ADEA for the 2012 Triennial to be held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. It is a contribution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, with a support from the ADEA Peer Review Teams from Mauritius and other African countries. It belongs to Theme One of the Triennial, entitled “Promoting critical knowledge, skills and qualifications for sustainable development in Africa: how to design and implement an effective response by education and training systems”.
6. A part of the usual introductory items (i.e., Abstract, Foreword, Acknowledgements, Acronyms, and Executive Summary), this report is divided into the following six major sections, each focusing on a specific aspect of the study:
 - ⊕ The first delves into a background discussion to set the tone, to introduce the major issues at stake, justify the study and explain who are the educationally disadvantaged learners;
 - ⊕ The second section examines the methodological considerations, with a focus on the research questions, the limitations, and ways for mitigating the negative effects of these limitations;
 - ⊕ The third section is descriptive. It presents the findings. In particular, it identifies and assesses specific initiatives that have been undertaken to address the educational needs of the marginalized learners in Nigeria and in the other five sampled countries;
 - ⊕ Next, the report discusses the findings of the case studies;
 - ⊕ It follows a synthetic section on the lessons learnt in this endeavor;
 - ⊕ Last, the report advances a few policy options for the educationally disadvantaged learner to recommend for the next decade and beyond.

A few annexes are attached to complete the report.

7. Views expressed in this report are those of the members of the Coordination and the Consultation teams, and not necessarily those of the Federal Government of Nigeria or the Association for the Development of Education in Africa. Therefore, these teams bear responsibility for the report in terms of its content and structure.

For the Coordination and the Consultation teams:

Pr Ibrahima Bah-Lalya
ADEA Coordinator of the Peer Review Program
and Study Principal Coordinator

Acknowledgments

8. Putting together a report of this study has been through the hard work of some people and the contribution of institutions to recognize here. We must start with the support of Honourable Minister of Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Pr Ruqqayyat Ahmed Rufai and her counterpart, the Nigeria Minister of State for Education, Barrister Neysom Wike for providing the conducive atmosphere that made the pursuance of this goal possible.
9. We also want to acknowledge the Universal Basic Education Commission that was willing to co-finance the study as a way of contributing to its mandate which is to make education available to all. This was possible because the organization has the Executive Secretary, Dr Ahmed Modibbo Mohammed, at the helm of affairs. He is a dynamic and a visionary leader who saw a study on the learning needs of the disadvantaged groups in Africa as contributory to the general task of UBEC. As soon as ADEA identified the area of interest, he set up a group to immediately package the activity. With such support he was willing to finance all aspects pending whatever ADEA was willing to refund. This work could not have had a better institutional support as experienced. We are grateful for this commitment and support.
10. We want to appreciate the role of the study team led by Pr Gidado Tahir for its commitment to work under pressure and for producing a report that would stand the test of knowledge. What has been produced is a joint output that represents a satisfactory platform for policy.
11. Our warm thanks go to the Mauritian team of the College of the Air for co-financing and contributing to substance. Dr Kaviraj Sukon, Ms. Tehjal Vaghjee-Rajiah and Ms. Premlata K. Ramtohul, are particularly recognized for the hard and timely work they dedicated to this.
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14. Last, but not the least, we are grateful to the ADEA Executive Secretariat, Forum of African Ministries of Education and to partner agencies for their political back-up and their technical and financial supports.

15. This is our hope that the study contributes to achieving EFA goals and the MDG and, by the way, contributes to easing the conditions of the marginalized. Our conviction is that taking care of the Educationally Disadvantaged Learner's needs is a sine qua non to self realization and to any effective sustainable development of communities and countries in Africa!

Acronyms

ADEA	Association for Development of Education in Africa
A&NFE	Adult and Non-Formal Education
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
DFID	Department for International Development
EEC	European Economic Commission
EDL	Educationally Disadvantaged Learner
EDGs	Educationally Disadvantaged Groups
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FGN	Federal Government of Nigeria
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
JCCE	Joint Consultative Committee on Education
LGCs	Local Government Councils
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NCE	National Council on Education
NCNE	National Commission for Nomadic Education
NFE	Non-Formal Education
NMEC	National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education
NNCAE	Nigeria National Council for Adult Education
NOGALSS	Non-Governmental Association for Literacy Support Services
REFLECT	Regenerated Freirean Literacy through Community Empowering Technique
SAME	State Agency for Mass Education
SMOE	State Ministry of Education
SUBEBs	State Universal Basic Education Boards
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Commission
UNDP	United Nations Development program

Executive Summary

16. Poverty, wars, internal conflicts, adverse climatic conditions, cultural and social stigmatizations, specific livelihood activities, uneven distribution of education services, irrelevant curricula, classroom practices that are not in tandem with specific learner needs, weak administration and poor funding are some of the reasons most often cited to explain marginalization in education and learning. Today, millions of children, youths and adolescents are subjected to this situation in sub-Saharan Africa. By 2015, over 56 million children will be deprived from the Right to Education there and over 50% of youth, aged between 17 and 22 years, would have less than 4 years of schooling. Adult literacy situation will not fair well despite considerable efforts to eradicate illiteracy in the continent.
17. Findings from the ADEA Peer Review exercise, carried out in Nigeria between 2006 and 2008, entitled *Reaching out to the Educationally Disadvantaged Learners (EDL)*, revealed that the challenges encountered in addressing their needs were common to many African countries. Thus, the present study is an attempt to take stock of the recommendations made by this Peer Review and to examine how to scale them up in order to adequately provide education and training for sustainable development to the disadvantaged in Africa. After a critical examination of the programs implemented in Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius Namibia, Nigeria and Senegal, the study identified cost-effective policies, programs, projects, and their good practices for the provision and sustenance of education and training for the EDL.
18. Experts from Mauritius and Nigeria participated in undertaking this study, under the supervision of a Coordinating Team. Using a combination of comparative and case study approaches, they explored the needs of the EDL, identified pertinent initiatives undertaken to address them, and examined the extent to which such initiatives effectively contributed to countries' efforts to meet national and international commitments, including EFA and the MDGs. Consequently lessons were drawn and policy options inferred for consideration by country and international policy makers.

The findings of this study could be summarized as thus:

19. The EDL belongs to several categories, including children enrolled in schools but lacking the capacity to effectively participate in available education provision, marginalized children and youth that are not in school, and so forth. The Nigerian case is particularly instructive, where there were millions of EDLs to contend with despite a concerted effort to address the issue through a variety of policy instruments and frameworks. Although youth literacy is much more improved, adult literacy remains the most neglected of all education goals.
20. All EDLs need additional or special education provisions given the nature of their social, economic, and physical challenges. Two approaches remain significant in reaching them. The first being, bringing the disadvantaged learner to school and the second one as bringing education to the disadvantaged learner. The first approach involves mainstreaming while the second one is characterized, in the main, by flexibility and adaptability. In both approaches an impressive result has been recorded through increase in enrolment, as well as improving learner retention and completion among the targeted groups;

21. Adopting the UNESCO *Inclusive Education Triangle* in identifying the needs of the disadvantaged and how to meet them, the study observed that the learning site dynamics are of particular significance to the EDL. Taken alone, the teaching/learning processes are found to constitute a critical category influencing the way stigmatization are dealt with in the context of inclusive education for the disadvantaged. Focusing on the three UNESCO inclusive education factors (i.e., learning environment, accessibility/affordability and entitlement/opportunities) the study identified policy actions that could support the education of the marginalized learner. Successful execution of any of these policy options on a targeted condition would provide the EDL with basic skills that would enable him or her to engage effectively in a national system and thus hopefully escapes the condition of marginalization. Essentially, the role of leadership and management is critical.
22. In the area of policy, the study clearly demonstrates that many relevant policies have been churned out by the respective national government in support of education of the disadvantaged groups in Africa. However, only a few countries have specific policies on vocational and technical education and training at the basic level. Despite appreciable improvement in some countries, national policies regarding early child development and childhood provision continue to be marked by neglect, especially during implementation.
23. Numerous lessons are learned from the case studies and a few of them are worth highlighting here. These are as follows:
 - Partnership It has been clearly demonstrated that various programs that have been designed and installed for the disadvantaged groups in Africa constitute viable mechanisms for ensuring the attainment of universal primary education, addressing the challenge of educational marginalization of adolescent and adult illiterates, promoting gender equality and empowering the disadvantaged, in particular women. The main challenge here is how they are to be effectively assessed and make results known to the larger public with a view to scaling them up;
 - EDL needs are bound to be wide-ranging. Therefore, future undertakings to address them must be comprehensive, and at the same time, flexible, adaptable, and focused on the specific needs of particular groups so that they could provide to everyone the opportunity to develop their potentials, given their objectives, conditions and aspirations. In this regard, out-of-school pathways should be tested wherever the livelihood of the EDL requires socioeconomic specializations that could not accommodate ordinary life settings;
 - Beyond the education sector however, the case studies demonstrate a strong relationship existing between strategic changes and sector-wide reforms. Thus promoting educational reform outside the context of an overall national economic development will be a “major mistake”.
 - is effective when it operates under shared responsibilities between governments, development partners, NGO and local communities. However, country membership of international organizations is in itself not a sufficient condition for them to effectively address the challenges of marginalization in education. Rather, they must domesticate all the instruments and conventions aimed at eliminating all forms of marginalization and provide the necessary policy measures, institutional framework and funding to ensure effective program implementation.

- Funding challenge is a key issue in the education of the disadvantaged. In all the cases examined, limited budgetary allocation is a common feature. In this regard, the EFA MDG “Revolution” has had a significant impact on the marginalized. It resulted on a significant increase of student populations, which retroactively is impacting on the availability of resources, as well as availability of qualified teaching staff, adequate infrastructure and sufficient equipment. Therefore, the tendency is to care for the many and neglect specific programs that deal with smaller disadvantaged entities.

24. These findings and the lessons drawn from them have given rise to pertinent proposals directed to governments as well as to their national /international partners for policy reform; these are presented at the end of the report.



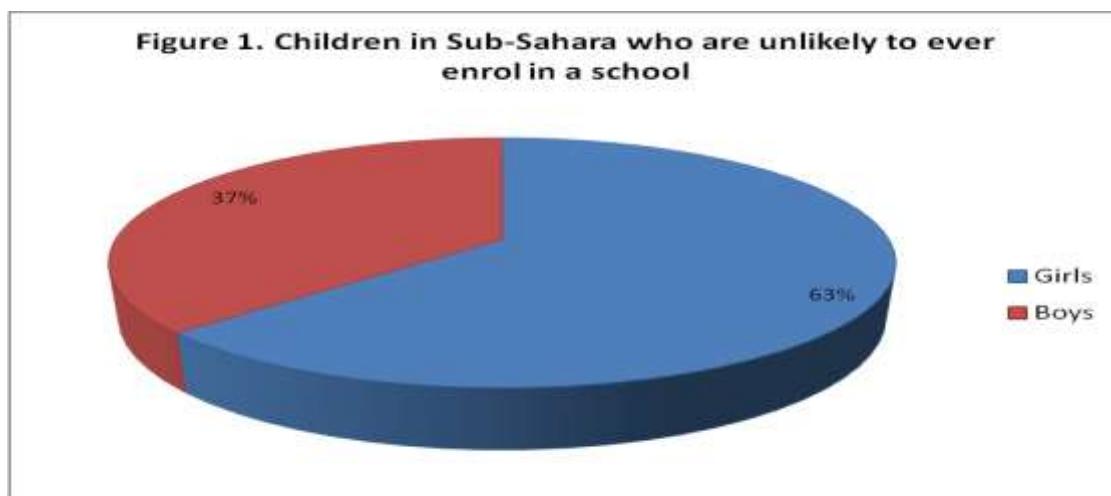
The ZEP (Zone d'Education Prioritaire) is a program specially designed to support education in underprivileged areas: Here, students are attending class in a Mauritius ZEP center. (Source: Coll I B-L)

SECTION 1: Introduction

1.1. Background

25. The right to equal opportunity for education is enshrined in most countries' national laws and constitutions as well as in international conventions such as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1960 Convention against Discrimination in Education. Yet, millions of children, youth and adult illiterates are denied their human right to education. Even if, according to UNESCO, the number of primary school age learners who are out-of-school has fallen from 105 million in 1999 to 72 million in 2007, this linear trend would still lead, in 2015, to 56 million children who would not be in school¹. This is particularly noticeable in Sub-Saharan Africa where more than 50% of youth aged between 17 and 22 years have less than four years of schooling in most countries, while adult literacy rate is abysmally low.
26. Due to poverty many children not only have malnutrition problems but, often have to work in order to contribute to the revenue of the family. Clearly, this has an adverse effect on their school attendance. Also, the combined effects of discrimination related to gender, language, geographical location, culture, social stigmatization and livelihood activities produce children youth and adult with an extremely high risk of isolation from the main stream of education. It is, for example, estimated that, as many as 8.5 million children from nomadic households do not attend school globally, and a considerable part of this population is found in Sub-Saharan Africa (Carr-Hill, 2009).
27. Natural harsh factors such as climate-related problems in Sahel and desert areas, droughts and floods in other areas, epidemics, etc., are also cited as factors contributing to keep children, adolescents and adults away from education.
28. Moreover, factors created or exacerbated by humankind also contribute to deprive the marginalized from education. For example, wars and conflicts, which generate both refugees and internally displaced people, have been cited as a major cause of marginalization, thus limited access to education in Africa.
29. Decrease in aid due to the financial crisis, global food crisis and the unexpected high rise prices of commodities have worsened the situation in many sub-Saharan countries.
30. When all these factors are relatively controlled other, more pervasive matters come in, to complicate the situation of learners from disadvantaged groups. These include uneven distribution of education offers which give privilege to some groups, zones and areas to the detriment of others. In Sub-Saharan Africa for example (Figure 1), 12 million girls as compared to 7 million boys are unlikely to ever enroll in a school because their workforce is needed at home, or they live in rural areas, or the cost of schooling is such high that parents decide to keep the boys at school.

¹ UNESCO (2010) *EFA Global Monitoring Report 2010, Reaching the marginalised*



31. Poorly adapted curricula, language of instruction and other similar factors could also be additional reasons that further marginalize learners from disadvantaged groups. Actually, disadvantaged learners are also found among children enrolled in schools. This could be the result of inadequate human, physical and material resources. In addition, there are learners requiring special attention because they are culturally stigmatized with such practices as early marriages and unwanted pregnancy. There are, as well, traumatized children due to ill pedagogical practices such as corporal punishment, familial problems such as the case of children raised in single parent families, the disabled and, at the other end of the spectrum, the gifted. All EDL from these groups need additional educational support or special provision because of the nature of their social, economic or physical predicaments.
32. Typically, the marginalized child and/or adult learner is poor and female, coming from an ethnic minority or displaced group due to conflicts and other adverse life conditions, living in a remote rural area or peri-urban pockets of poverty, and not fully conversant with the language of instruction.
33. Unfortunately, marginalization in education and its effects hardly take center stage in national discourse. It is therefore vital to bring this and other related issues in education under public scrutiny, as overcoming marginalization will play a pivotal role in reducing social disparities while ensuring future prosperity, human rights, social cohesion and social justice.
34. Specific to the case study, it can be stated that Nigeria has made noticeable progress in addressing marginalization in education. However, serious challenges still remain to be addressed with the possibility that the country might miss the 2015 EFA target date if the current trends are allowed to continue. It has been reported by the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education that about 38.5 million children who ought to be in school and who are mostly coming from marginalized groups are not in any form of schooling (FMoE, 2009) while the challenge in adult and youth literacy is even greater, as estimates range from 23 to 40 million who may miss the target date of EFA 2015 (NMEC, 2011).
35. The ADEA Peer Review Project, which was carried out in Nigeria between 2006 and 2008 focused on ways and means for addressing the education needs of these groups. It focused on Nomads, Adult Learners and Children in Difficult Circumstances. It led to useful conclusions and recommendations regarding the education of these

groups (Bah-Lalya et al., 2011).

36. The study observed that most of the challenges encountered in Nigeria were, in fact, common to many other African countries. Lessons learnt from the peer review exercise could thus be utilized to guide programs initiated in other places to support the marginalized learners in the continent.

1.2. Purpose of the study

37. The purpose of the study is, therefore, to contribute to developing cost-effective strategies to take education and training to the poor and disadvantaged people in Africa, thus facilitating the provision of basic survival and professional skills needed for a healthy life, a decent living and effective contribution to country's sustainable development.

38. The study will take stock of initiatives undertaken by Nigeria to support the educationally disadvantaged learner, with special attention to the recommendations made during the peer review exercise conducted in 2006-08, under the aegis of Nigeria and ADEA. Going further to this stock taking exercise, the study will examine specific country cases for the education of the disadvantaged learners by identifying and weighing lessons learnt from five other countries sampled for the purpose of comparison, identifying practices that work, and sharing of policies. These countries are: Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, and Senegal.

SECTION 2: Methodology

2.1. Research Questions

39. This study shall address a number of questions, among which the following are prominent:

- 1) Who are the educationally marginalized learners in Africa and what are their educational and training needs?
- 2) What specific initiatives are being undertaken in terms of policies and practices to provide education to the marginalized learners in Nigeria and elsewhere in the five other sampled countries?
- 3) To what extent are these initiatives contributing towards the achievement of EFA goals and the MDGs in these countries, as well as contributing towards enhancing sustainable development in Africa?
- 4) What lessons can be drawn from the case studied that could inform education programs for the disadvantaged learners?
- 5) What are the opportunities to benefit from and possible hindrances to overcome if these programs have to be scaled-up, especially in terms of policy, system's review, role of government at national and decentralized levels, role of local, national and international partners, etc.?
- 6) What key recommendations could be formulated and what directions to propose for the next decade and beyond?

2.2. Research limitations

40. The study is confronted with a series of issues that need to be addressed in order to identify and implement appropriate research strategies that would permit to effectively answer the questions raised on the above section.

41. First, it has to combine two types of methodologies: those relating to case studies where researchers concentrate on in-depth exploration of one subject, and the others, utilized in comparative studies where the focus is on commonalities and differences between a set of subjects.

42. The second issue to be considered is the fact that the study deals with a sensitive matter as it would, in a way, assess national policies that do not give due attention to the marginalized but focus on formal schooling.

43. Another potential impediment that need to be addressed has to do with the fact that the study is mainly conducted by two sub-teams that have to work far away from each other, each of them bringing a unique contribution. The first, located in Nigeria, brings in the field experience where the peer review on outreaching the marginalized groups was carried out in 2006 - 2008; the second sub-team is in Mauritius. It is familiar with ADEA peer review approach as it was the first to implement the ADEA peer review approach.

44. Other challenges relate to the fact that documentation on the Educationally Disadvantaged Groups is too limited, especially as it relates to sustainable development. Data on the matter are relatively scarce. On the other hand, the conceptual frame of the marginalized is kind of hazy as everybody defines it according to the objectives it sought after.
45. Limitations regarding money and time were also an adverse factor as it would not allow scrutinizing deeper or going to details in situation where most non-formal programs are decentralized and are easily located in hard to access rural areas.
46. These constraints and others dictated the way the study was set, structured and developed. A series of strategies were identified and implemented to circumvent to the negative effects of these constraints.

2.3. Mitigating the negative effects of the limitations

47. Two sets of researcher consultants, each domiciled in a country, are identified. The first is made of three researchers from Nigeria, who worked on the Nigerian case study. It employed a descriptive survey research design to identify and appreciate the complexities of the activities being implemented for the educationally disadvantaged learner and their effectiveness in achieving their sets of objectives. It paid particular attention to the 2006-08 peer review findings. Several data gathering techniques were employed, namely interviews, focus group discussion and specific questionnaires for targeted respondents.
48. The second sub-team, comprising of two researchers based in Mauritius, under the supervision of the ADEA focal person, concentrated its work on identifying analyzing and comparing the countries initiatives undertaken by the six sampled countries. It basically employed desktop review in order to locate and analyze data and information on the six countries for the purpose of comparing their educational policies and practices in respect to the educationally marginalized learners with a view to responding to the critical questions highlighted above.
49. A senior education researcher is identified in Nigeria to serve as a Team Leader to liaise between the two sub-teams, coordinate the field work, develop synthesis of findings made by the sub-teams and maintain contact with the study Coordination Team.
50. The later (the Coordination Team) is composed of senior education experts from ADEA, Nigeria and Mauritius. It is responsible for quality control, maintaining the study on track, liaising with the organizing structures of the Triennial, fine-tuning the analysis where ever necessary, contributing to drawing final recommendations, and depositing the final version of the report.
51. A cost sharing approach is implemented as UBEC takes partially charge of financing the work of the first sub-theme and Mauritius College of the Air does similarly for the Mauritian one.
52. The study itself is conducted using a three step process:
 - First the outcomes of the peer review study regarding the educationally disadvantaged learner in Nigeria is analyzed together with the development that occurred between 2008 and 2011 in order to complete information, insure that the lessons are fully reported, and recommendations are made in term of policies and practices;

- Next, the study places its agenda within the wider African environment to document and compare examples from other African countries that face similar challenges. A sampling technique is utilized here. Apart of Nigeria, five other countries are identified for this, including Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius, Namibia, and Senegal. At this stage, desktop and comparative techniques are tried out to identify and weight lessons learnt from each case. The initiatives explored included those conducted with the ADEA WGNFE and Kenya on: "Towards Inclusive and Equitable Basic Education; Kenya's experience".
- Once these two steps are fully covered, the study brings together the elements gathered during steps one and two in order to draw lessons, examine issues of transferability of experiences, propose directions to go in the near future, and identify strategies to utilize in order to follow suggested directions.

53. The presentation below is a report on the findings of the study resulting from implementing these strategies.



Young women from a nomadic community near Abuja, Nigeria, combine farming activities and literacy classes in a nomadic education center. (Source : Coll I.B-L)

SECTION 3: Educationally Disadvantaged Learner's Conditions in Sub-Saharan Africa

54. Before observing the particular situation of the educationally disadvantaged learners in the sampled countries it is indicated to briefly present the educational environment in which they function. Therefore, the following section provides, at a glance, the six country's educational systems referred to in this study and how learning happens there. Only after this quick review, the study presents the findings on who the educationally disadvantaged learners are and where they come from. Once this stand is set, the study focuses on the particular case of Nigeria.

3.1 How learning happens in the sampled countries?

Ghana

55. On the average, it takes about 20 years for a child to complete education in Ghana. Children from wealthy families usually benefit from attending private schools while children who are from poor families attend public schools. Most children in Ghana begin their education at the age of three or four. They first enter nursery school which is then followed by two years in kindergarten. After kindergarten, the child then continues to primary school, junior high school, senior high school and then finally university. The average age at which a child begins first grade is 6 years.

56. Before, there were more boys enrolled in schools than girls but with the implementation of equal rights for men and women there are about the same number of boys and girls enrolled in schools in Ghana now. However, it is still challenging for girls to reach tertiary level education due to, among other factors, unequal distribution of house chores between boys and girls and teenage pregnancy.

57. The Republic of Ghana has 12,630 primary schools, 5,450 junior secondary schools, 503 senior secondary schools, 38 teacher training colleges now known as colleges of education, 18 technical institutions, 2 diploma-awarding institutions and 5 universities serving a population of 18 million; this means that most Ghanaians have relatively easy access to good education.

58. There are however, isolated nomadic communities, mostly cattle breeders of the Northern part of the country, which need special attention. Also a significant number of children from the city poor neighbourhoods could not go to school or, when they have the chance to attend, dropout early because of economical and societal predicaments. The later is particularly the case with the girl child.

Kenya

59. The National Education System of Kenya consists in general of eight years of primary school, four years of secondary school and four years of university education. This is referred to as 8-4-4 system of education.
60. Although the formal education appears to start at primary level, Kenya has a well developed pre-primary education that prepares children for primary school level. The Ministry of Education, Science and Technology now plays a vital role in the development and management of this level of education that prior to 1980s, was being handled by Local Government city/town or local county councils, community level local committees and Non-Governmental Organisations which includes churches and private companies for children of their employees.
61. The academic year runs from January to December. Both primary and secondary schools have three to four week breaks during the year in months of April and August. The longest vacation is in December/January.
62. The Kenya Government introduced compulsory free primary education as from January 2003. By this time, there were about 18,000 primary schools with over six million pupils. About one and half million children who would have not had an opportunity to go to school are said to have joined primary school. Most of the primary schools are day public schools that serve the immediate communities, a few boarding public schools, low cost boarding schools and private high cost day and boarding schools.
63. There are about 3,500 secondary schools with a population of about 700,000 students. The transition rate from primary level to secondary level is less than 50%. Selection for the next level of education is based on the performance in the national examinations.
64. Kenya is renowned for the very innovative adult and non formal education programs initiated there, since the 1960's, to address the needs of a significant number of nomad groups spread in its vast grazing areas as well as in the townships of Nairobi and the other major cities of the country. Such programs often combine literacy with social and job skill acquisition.

Mauritius

65. The education system in Mauritius is largely based on the British system since Mauritius was a former British colony. After the country became independent in 1968, education became one of the main preoccupations of the Mauritian Government to meet the new challenges awaiting the country. Considerable investment of resources, both human and material, has been put into the Education sector and impressive progress has been achieved. Every child receives a grant during the last year at pre-primary school. Six years of primary education is free and compulsory in Mauritius; every child also benefits from free textbooks. Education has been free throughout the seven years at the secondary level since 1976 and at the undergraduate level at University of Mauritius since 1988. Transport is free for every one following full-time courses.
66. Mauritius is blessed with one of the most performing educational system in Africa although a private tuition system had had an adverse effect on equity. Because of this and other factors, the country still experiences problems with the high rate of failure

with children coming from poor families, especially those from Black River areas, Rodrigues Island, and a few other places.

Namibia

67. In Namibia, Pre-schools and Kindergartens are run privately while schools are mainly run by the State. There are over 1500 schools in the country, of which about 100 are private schools, mainly farm schools. As per the Namibian Education Act (2001) compulsory school attendance exists for the seven years of primary school, respectively for children between the age of six and sixteen. School fees are not allowed for primary education. The grades can be classified as Grades 1-4 (lower primary), 5-7 (upper primary, end of compulsory school attendance), 8-10 (junior secondary) and 11-12 (senior secondary). Some private schools differ from this model. In the first three grades, the lessons are given in the mother tongue of the majority of the students. Grade four is the transition phase. From grade five onwards, English is the only language to be used for teaching and assessments. After finishing grade twelve, the student receives the Namibia Senior Secondary Certificate (NSSC) and is allowed to attend a Namibian university.
68. There are only two public universities in Namibia. While the Polytechnic of Namibia (Polytec) tries to concentrate on skills demanded by the industrial sector such as technical or administrative studies, the University of Namibia (UNAM) tries to cover other classic university subjects.
69. As with Kenya and Nigeria, there are sizeable numbers of nomads in Namibia who are out of mainstream education and who need special provision because of their life styles and the fact that they live in relatively secluded areas.

Nigeria

70. Primary education begins at the age of six for the majority of Nigerians. Students spend six years in primary school and graduate with a school-leaving certificate. Primary school students are required to take a Common Entrance Examination to qualify for admission into the Federal and State Government schools. The Universal Basic Education (*UBE*) came as a replacement for Nigeria's universal primary education scheme of the 6-3-3-4 system of primary education. The 9-3-4 system of education was designed in conformity with the MDGs and education for all (EFA). The *UBE* involves 6 years of primary School and 3 years of junior secondary school, culminating in 9 years of uninterrupted schooling, and transition from one class to another is automatic but assessed through continuous assessment. This scheme is monitored by the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), and has made it free and a right of every child. Students spend six years in Secondary School that is 3 years of JSS (Junior Secondary School), and 3 years of SSS (Senior Secondary School). By Senior Secondary School Class 2 (SS2), students are taking the GCE O-Level exam, which is not mandatory, but most students take it to prepare for the Senior Secondary School Exam. The Senior Secondary School Exam is taken in the last year of high school (SS3). Private organizations, the State government or the Federal government manages secondary schools in Nigeria.
71. The Federal Republic of Nigeria is made up of thirty-six States and the Federal Capital Territory. There are about two Federal Government Colleges in each state. These

schools are funded and managed directly by the Federal Government through the Ministry of Education. State owned secondary schools are funded by each state government and are not comparable to the Federal government schools.

72. The government has majority control of university education. The Federal Government of Nigeria has adopted education as an instrument for national development.
73. In addition to the number of universities, there are 13 Federal and 14 State owned Polytechnic Colleges respectively. These were established to train technical, middle-level manpower. Some of the colleges are beginning to award degrees. English Language is the medium of instruction.
74. The Nigerian Federal Government play a considerable role, through its national commissions and other means, in addressing the needs of about 38 million out-of-school children and over 23 million illiterate or poorly literate adult and youth learners. It is supported, in this huge effort by a host of actors, including the 36 State Governments, the Federal Capital of Abuja, local authorities, international organizations, and individual initiatives. Coordinating and synergizing their interventions turnout to be one of the challenges to face in this country.

Senegal

75. The Senegalese education system is based on its French equivalent. The 1998 assessment of the education system led the Government to undertake a thorough reform of the sector and, in 2000, to adopt a general policy letter for the education sector (for the period 1999 - 2008), for which the Ten-Year Education and Training Program (PDEF) is the operational framework. This document, which was revised in 2005, incorporates education initiatives into a macroeconomic framework by coordinating them with the poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP) in the medium term and the MDGs in the long term.
76. Articles 21 and 22 of the Constitution adopted in January 2001 guarantee access to education for all children. Secular education is compulsory and free in Senegal up to age 16; although this policy is not always enforced in areas where Islamic education is preferred. A combination of poverty and an uncaring administrative attitude also drives many parents and children away. At the end of 6 years, pupils must write a common examination to determine whether they may study further.
77. Secondary school vary a lot with many classes having pupil teacher ratio of as high as 80:1 – leading to large number of drop-outs. At the end of 2 years, a second examination pushes many out of the system leaving the fortunate ones to complete their secondary education cycle over another 4 years. Many girls never make it thus far at all. Children who are unable to find seats in secondary school classrooms drift away into the informal sector where they often apprentice themselves for a little training in return for no wage. A variety of donor agencies are trying to reverse this trend by introducing student-centered vocational training colleges.



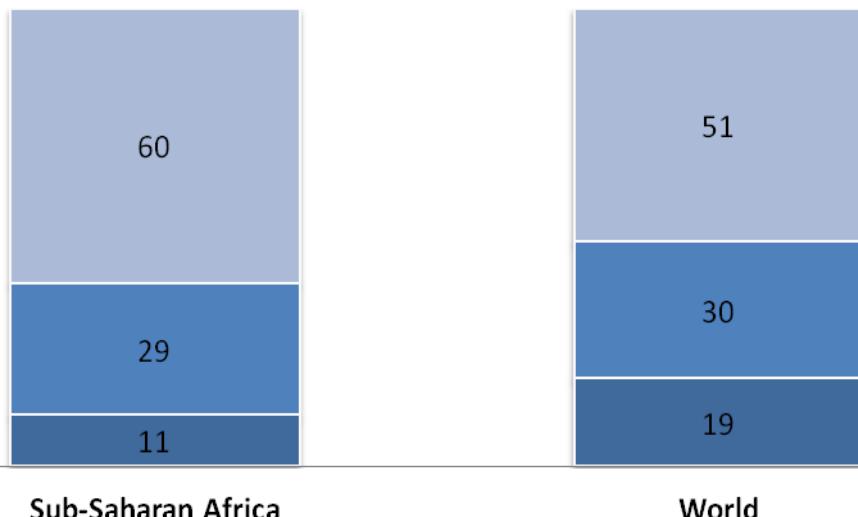
*Street children are trained for job while registered for literacy classes in a Senegalese specialized center.
(Source : Coll I. B-L)*

3.2 Educationally Disadvantaged Learners: who are they and where are they from?

78. The 2009 Report of UNESCO Institute for Statistics indicates that 67.2 million children were out-of-school in the world; out of these 44.8% were from Sub-Saharan Africa.
79. Further analysis (Figure 2) shows that in sub-Saharan Africa, 11%, as compared 30% in the world, of school-age children have already left primary school or dropped out. Clearly these children have not acquired all the necessary skills and are therefore likely to face difficulties in securing a decent job or in joining education and training system again.

Figure 2. Percentage of primary school-age population who are out-of-school and who are either likely to attend or not to attend school in future.

■ Left School ■ Likely to enter school in future ■ Unlikely to enter school

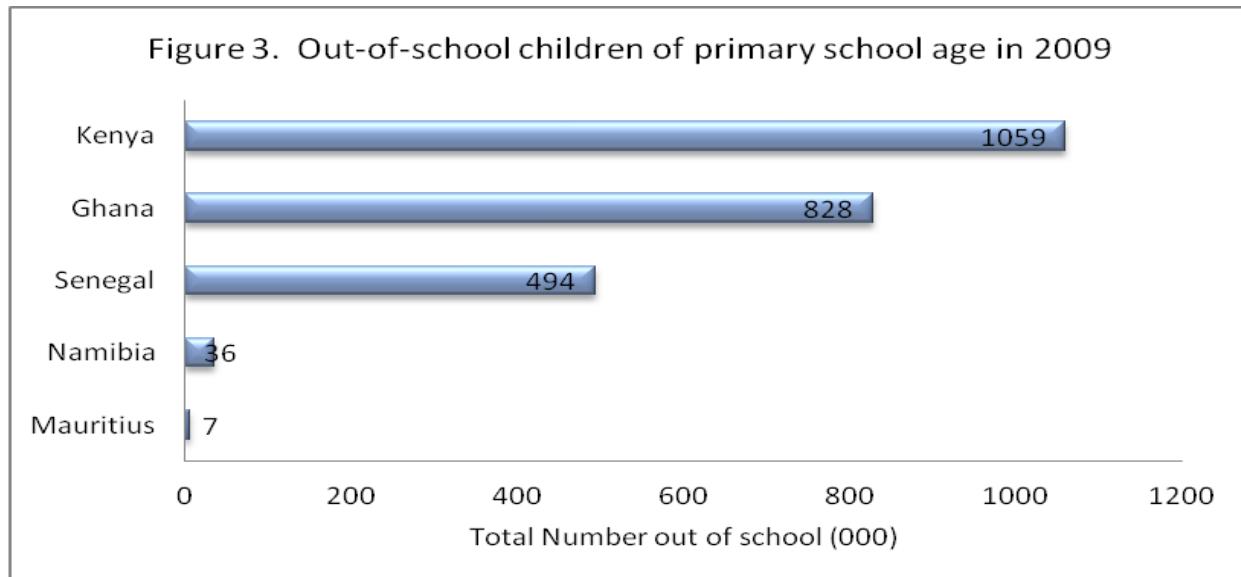


Source: UIS (2011)

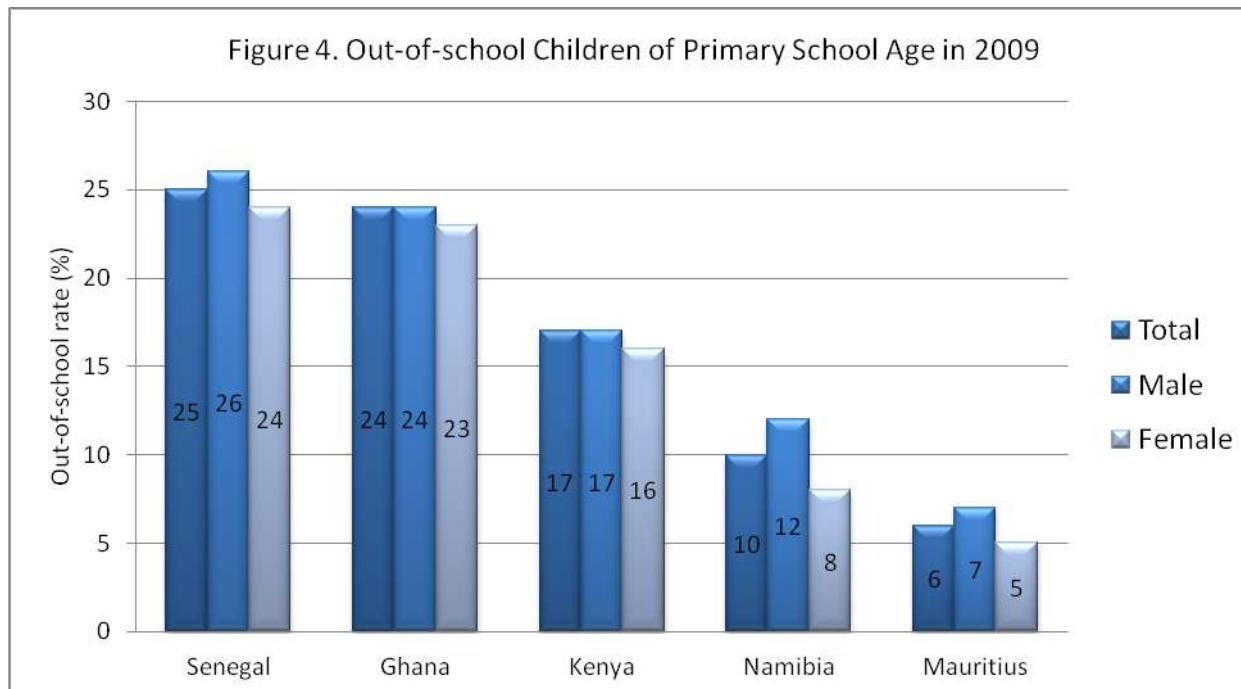
80. Out of the remaining children who have never had the chance to join the school, 30% in the world and 29% in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are likely to enter school in future. Late entry is always encouraged but it comes with its own lot of problems related to age-grade distortions and adaptability to the learning environment. The vast majority of primary school-age children (51% globally and 60% in SSA) are unlikely to join any school.

81. Despite huge efforts, the number of children of primary school age in 2009 who were out-of-school remains unacceptably high in many countries as shown in Figure 3. Over one million children were not at school in Kenya as compared to seven thousand in Mauritius. However, as shown in Figure 4, Senegal had the highest percentage (25%) of primary school age children who were not going to school. In all countries, the percentage of boys who were out of the education system was higher than that of girls². These circumstances may give rise to the exploitation of children through increase in child labor. Therefore, it is important to continuously identify those out-of-school children and provide them with the opportunity to acquire the education, training and employability skills so that they can lead a decent life and contribute meaningfully to the socio-economic development of their country. Such second chance programs may include courses in literacy, numeracy, ICT, entrepreneurship and citizenship education.

² It is important to be reminded that the disadvantaged population is much broader than just out of school children. In many countries the majority of the dropout are boys even if females remain the most disadvantaged.



Source: UIS (2011)



Source: UIS (2011)

3.3 How Learning Effectively Happens For the Educationally Disadvantaged Learner in Nigeria

82. Prior to independence in 1960, Nigeria had a history of dominance of Qu'ranic schools in the North and Missionary schools in the south. All of these promoted mostly religious literacy. At independence a total of 15,703 primary schools with an enrolment of 2,912,618 children were established. By the year 1996, the number of primary schools had risen from 15,703 in 1960 to 40,055, an increase of 255%. School

enrolment had reached 14,078,478. Thus pupil-school ratio changed from 185 pupils per school in 1960 to 301 per school in 1996.

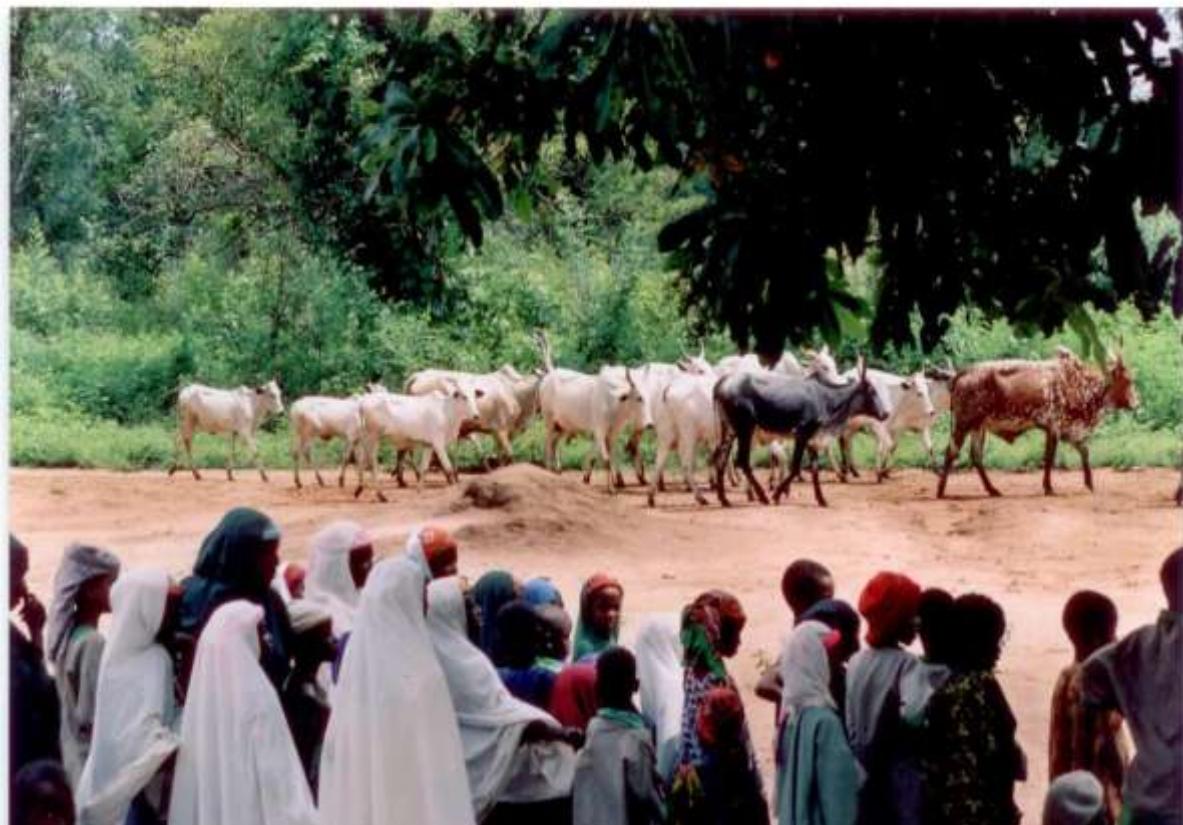
83. In this country, the combination of poverty, cultural factors as well as geographical location in rural/suburban zones, hard to reach areas, contributed to the increase of the pool of marginalized. Therefore, the Federal and State Governments mobilized considerable attention to this subsector and developed several programs aiming at fully integrating and utilizing this subsector for the betterment of the marginalized child, adolescent and adult Nigerian learner.
84. The peer review exercise, conducted between 2006 and 2008 under the aegis of ADEA and the Federal Government of Nigeria has pinpointed the major role of such programs in addressing the need of marginalized groups. Not only has it constituted a useful tool for achieving Universal Basic Education (UBE), but it has also contributed to promoting gender equality and women empowerment. It also played a considerable part in improving the health conditions of Nigerian population in general.
85. The target groups that have been given more attention in these programs were: the non-literate adults (23.5%), out-of-school youth (19.9%), Qu'ranic pupils (12.0%), extra-mural students (11.6%), inmates (10.0%), nomadic pastoralists (9.6%), migrant fishermen (6.4%), and sub-degree/degree students (5.2%). Graduation rates in these programs were as follows: 52.9% for 2001, 54.8% for 2002, 58.9% for 2003, 56.1% for 2004, and 37.7% for 2005. Overall, the graduation rate for the five years surveyed through the peer review exercise was 51.6%³.
86. Teaching methods varied according to the different programs, the most important being Observation/Demonstration and Regenerated Freiran Literacy through Community Empowering Technique (REFLECT). Others are group work, assignment, film show/drama and excursions.
87. Curriculum contents were largely determined by cultural and religious affiliations of local communities (44.9%) and, to some extent, by the NMEC and its partners (25.8%).
88. The 2006-08 peer review recorded six different types of adult education programs being run across the country, all addressing the needs of marginalized groups: Basic and Functional literacy (25.4%); Vocational Skills Acquisition (23.4%); Post-literacy (20.2%); Remedial, Extra-mural / Continuing Education (14.9%); Nomadic Education (8.9%), and the remaining programs geared toward mainstreaming the “Almajiri” religious education.
89. As an illustration, key feature of the later three are presented below: Nomadic education, Qu'ranic Islamic schools and the Girl child Education.

3.3.1. Nomadic education

³ Bah-Lalya and al. IBIDEM

90. In Nigeria, nomadic Education, has accounted for a total intake of 408,705 in 2006. This includes projects aimed at nomadic cattle breeders, as well as those relating to boat schools and other initiatives targeting farmers in secluded areas.

91. The following table shows the distribution of education offers in 2006 for Nomadic groups in the Nigerian Federation.



The child and the cow are central to the social and economic system that sustains the nomadic way of life in West African cattle breeding communities: Here, at the end of a long day, young students (from a nomadic education center) and the cows (coming from the grazing area) are both heading toward the nomadic temporary settlement, near KM 26 in Northern Nigeria . (Source : Coll I. B-L)

Table 1: Distribution of education offers in 2006 for Nomadic groups in the Nigerian Federation

DISTRIBUTION OF NOMADIC PRIMARY SCHOOL IN NIGERIA BY STATES in 2006

STATE	NO OF SCH	NO OF TEACH	PUPIL'S ENROLMENT			OBS.
			MALE	FEM.	TOTAL	
Abia	9	54	674	713	1387	
Abuja	41	158	2154	1791	3945	36 states and
Adamawa	77	252	4479	2921	7400	f c t Abuja
Akwa Ibom	16	98	3035	3250	6285	Area
Anambra	125	340	8824	8229	17053	
Bauchi	125	387	18738	13014	31752	
Bayelsa	65	96	7983	6744	14727	
Benue	100	427	9803	6981	16784	
Borno	110	276	11737	8191	19928	
Cross River	122	129	11947	10673	22620	
Delta	85	217	4332	4389	8721	
Ebonyi	15	173	3292	3274	6566	
Edo	65	104	8955	7790	16745	
Ekiti	10	42	782	703	1485	
Enugu	70	244	3115	2875	5990	
Gombe	77	322	16239	9896	26135	
Imo	38	166	1825	1745	3570	
Jigawa	59	256	5312	2679	7991	
Kaduna	135	427	18762	9732	28494	
Kano	33	178	8294	3178	11472	
Katsina	73	336	18371	8474	26845	
Kebbi	63	219	3272	1562	4834	
Kogi	13	45	864	514	1378	
Kwara	45	149	1319	965	2284	

Lagos	10	70	1104	1215	2319	
Nasarawa		53	198	4312	3052	
Niger	169	376	10924	6238	17162	
Ogun	16	70	2256	1831	4087	
Ondo	15	80	2035	1847	3882	
Osun	32	68	1293	1123	2416	
Oyo	27	88	3041	1370	4411	
Plateau	111	706	14826	14492	29318	
River	54	199	3488	3367	6855	
Sokoto	50	152	4936	3211	8147	
Taraba	104	345	11572	7366	18938	
Yobe	50	188	3738	2123	5861	
Zamfara	32	76	2498	1056	3554	
TOTAL	2294	7711	240131	168574	408705	

92. As the 2006-08 Peer Review observed, programs targeting the nomads had the potential to help Nigeria attain its EFA goals and the MDGs under the conditions that problems identified during the course of both policy making and implementation are urgently addressed.

93. Twelve of these problems were found to be particularly critical to the future of nomadic education in Nigeria namely:

- Lack of administrative and physical infrastructures for managing this specialized area of education delivery. This entails lack of electricity in some sites, no or poorly stocked library, etc.;
- Erratic and insufficient enrolments compared to the number of school-age children;
- Insufficient time for study as children are heavily used to watching over grazing cattle;
- Low literacy levels of the learners which complicate the work of teachers. The use of an appropriate medium for teaching would have eased the problem. Unfortunately the decisions made regarding this matter have been questioned in several visited sites;
- Absence of babysitting facilities, leading to mothers having to sit with their babies in class;
- Ineffective integration of HIV/AIDS and other health related issues in the curriculum;

- Too high drop out in Adult and Non-Formal Education programs because of shortcomings in management, pedagogy and other factors;
- the private sector still not fully involved in the funding of A&NFE programs;
- Weaknesses observed in the system which has been set up to involve Tertiary Education Training and Research institutions. Actually, nomadic education programs; once developed; are not properly absorbed into the mainstream;
- Poor funding “mostly due to misinterpretation of definitions which tend to either exclude nomadic education from some sources of funding; or reduce Education For All to Education For Children; thus depriving adult and adolescent nomadic people from some resource provisions”;
- Poor management of funds at some levels of bureaucracy; and
- Poor handling of issues regarding teacher training, motivation and remuneration of those teachers who have to operate in specific and very challenging conditions.

3.3.2. Qu’ranic Islamic schools

94. Islam has been in existence in the Sub-Saharan region of Africa as far as 7th Century as a religion and an educational system. This is to say that Islamic education predated Western education in this region. With the Christian missionary activities and colonial conquest, the religion and its system of learning in this area had continued unabated. There was significant resistance by the pre-colonial states to the European military incursions as well to the introduction of Western culture, education and way of life. Although the Muslim populations were militarily subdued, their resistance to the intrusion of Western culture was real in many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa. This situation resulted in placing them at the margin of formal education participation. Their continuous neglect, especially within the context the Dakar Framework, can no longer be justified by national governments. This is the reason explaining that several attempts are made to mainstream their educational systems. Two of these attempts are particularly interesting: the Tsangaya Schools and the “Almajiri Education program.

✓ The Tsangaya Qu’ranic Schools

95. Considering that a significant number of school going age children does not attend formal schools because of various reasons, NMEC, the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education and its development partners collaborated to launch initiatives aimed at providing basic education through Qu’ranic schools by way of integrating secular subjects - Mathematics, English language, Social Sciences and Science - to their religious curriculum (for details see the Nigerian Peer Review report). Various sensitization techniques were used to convince Qu’ranic school owners to accept the innovation. Those who were persuaded formed an association to continue the sensitization and to represent them in dealing with the administration. From 2001 to 2005, about 125,000 Qu’ran schools learners benefited from basic education provision through the Tsangaya program. As indicated in Table 2, which was drawn from the survey conducted in Bornou State by the peer reviewers, the program is very innovative in its approach to mainstreaming Islamic education.

Table 2: Qu’ran schools learners

Item	Sites in the Bornou State (Year 2006)			
	Goni Zarami	Saina	Sheikh Sherif	Sheikh Adamu
	Abba Umar	Ibrahim Sale	Dan Kelluri	
Integration	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Student	377 (46 girls)	1, 300 (80 girls)	295 (45 girls)	600 (100 girls)
Population			150 boarding boys; 55 non residents.	Majority live on the site
Infrastructure	1 classroom and a large pavilion	3 classrooms, a pavilion and toilets. A generator for night classes.	2 pavilions. Very poor conditions	A pavilion facing the street.
Pedagogical Organization	15 to 20 students per instructor	By age groups	12 teachers including 2 women	30 teachers. No indication as how teaching is organized.
Time allocation for integration	One hour per day during working days. Full time on Thursdays and Fridays.	Thursdays and Fridays (English, math and Arabic)	90 minutes per week and per subject matter (English, math, Arabic and Islamic studies)	Only Islamic studies added to the Qu’ran.
Partners	State Government; UNICEF; NGO	State Government	State Government	No

96. An assessment at the level of the State indicates that students from Tsangaya schools tend to excel in academic performance and often join the formal school system to university with no major problems⁴.

✓ The “Almajiri” Education Programs

97. At the eve of the launching of its UBE program in 2000 in Nigeria, the Federal Government was confronted with the dilemma of incorporating the considerable number of male children and youth, who were out-of-school but participating in the traditional Qu’ranic and Islamic Education. It eventually found an answer in a new initiative called the “Almajiri” Education Program. The program, which is under the Universal Basic Education Commission, is designed to integrate the Islamic School

⁴ Bah-Lalya and al.(2011) IBIDEM

system within the wider UBE system so as to provide quality basic education to the target population. The target population is of course the out-of-school children and youth, who patronize the traditional Qu'ranic and Islamiya school system.

98. The Nigerian program, which just came on board in, 2010, seeks to address effectively and on a long term basis the challenges facing the traditional Islamic Education sector, especially as they relate to itinerary and begging (bara⁵). The policy objective is to ensure institutional development of Islamic school system and the provision of requisite infrastructural and welfare facilities. Funding for this program comes from the UBE intervention fund, the Education Trust Fund and the MDG's Office in the Presidency. It is being coordinated by a central coordination committee domiciled in the UBE Commission. However, the management and implementation of the project are to be done by the States.
99. The core driving concept here is integration, where teaching of secular subjects is to be done on Thursdays and Fridays to those in the Qu'ranic schools and their products to be eventually mainstreamed into formal Arabic/ Islamic School System. The other key component of the program is the provision of support to poor Islamic community schools through grant-in-aid and other measures to improve the standard. It intends to develop textual materials and train specialized teachers for these schools.
100. The Program is not oblivious of the entrenched resistance by the ulamas (Islamic teachers/schools) to any innovation in this sector. It therefore intends to embark on extensive mobilization and sensitization of the people. The program is gigantic and the framework is much elaborated. So far, implementation has just started. The Educational Trust Fund, which is the funding education agency under the Federal Ministry of Education, has begun the provision of infrastructural facilities and UBEC is working hard towards creating an enduring institutional framework for the implementation of the program. Results are not discernible as of now. However, policy and institutional framework and funding arrangement are in place and from the look, this is poised to become a successful integration venture.

3.3.3. The Girl-Child Education Programs

101. Girls continue to comprise the majority of disadvantaged in Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa in general. Many initiatives are tried out to correct this situation: raising national awareness in girl-child education, increase in political and financial commitment through advocacy and sensitization of policy makers at all levels, as well as parents, school authorities, other leaders and girls themselves; and developing schools' technical capacity and pedagogical skills to create a girl-friendly environment that enhances participation of girls and improve learning outcomes. Government and

⁵ The "baras" in Nigeria are similar to the "Talibes" in Senegal and Mali. They are begging students. The philosophy behind is to teach these children humility, stoicism and learning how to survive in adverse conditions. Unfortunately, in many occasions, this has been diverted from its original intent, to use the children as providers of goods for cupid masters.

development partners promote the policies of child-friendly school principles as minimum benchmarks for effective schools linked to community empowerment, creating school management committees with community involvement and participation; collaborating with stakeholders in reviewing existing curricula and teaching materials for gender sensitivity; and promoting the employment of more female teachers to serve as role models and mentoring out-of-school girls.

102. Nigeria launched the Girls' Education Project (GEP) in 2004. This project was fully funded by DFID but driven by the FMoE, although managed by UNICEF. The Northern States of Bauchi, Borno, Jigawa, Katsina, Niger and Sokoto served as pilot. The activities of the project contributed to significant increase in enrolment in the schools that participated in the project. The policy thrust was to address low rates of participation of girls in basic education system. The design was to provide a model of good practice in 20 school communities in each of the six LGAs in these pilot states.
103. The significant increase recorded in access as well as retention in the GEP schools in the pilot States, encouraged the FGN and 15 other Northern State governments of Adamawa, Gombe, Kaduna, Kano, Kebbi, Nassarawa, Kwara, Yobe and Zamfara, where statistics have shown the need to enhance girls education; and also five Southern States of Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Imo and Oyo to address the issue of boys drop-out in the States. GEP Phase 2 was designed to build on the success in increased enrolment and attendance leveraged from 2005-2007, but shifted emphasis to strengthening State Government and school-based management systems, which have sustained and extended increased girls' participation in basic education. The multi-sectoral initiatives of the FMoE led to gradual elimination of gender disparities. By 2009 a reduction in disparity to between 15% - 25% was recorded in many Northern States with high gender disparities.
104. The National Policy on Gender in Basic Education has been developed and disseminated, and through advocacy, sensitization and mobilization programs, awareness have been created in many States and communities targeting women and girls for formal and non-formal education opportunities. Some of the States that participated in this project enacted laws in favor of girl-child education. For instance, Katsina State has a policy that every LGA must have one primary and secondary school each for boys and girls, respectively within 3 kilometers from the place of where the child resides. Others have laws for retention of girls in schools and laws prohibiting the withdrawal of girls from school for marriage. Through the instrumentality of the MDGs conditional cash transfer to indigent families to support and ensure that their girl-child is sent to school in GEP States was instituted. Other states established continuing education centers for school drop-out and model second chance education centers and Business Apprenticeship Training centers, with a view to encouraging women participation and girl-child to mainstream into formal education system.
105. Results of these initiatives have been modest. However, State planning processes are beginning to assist girls' education. For instance 770 rural females were awarded teacher training scholarship to State Colleges of Education and safe water is being increasingly provided on school sites funded by states, among other outcomes.

3.3.4. Recapitulation of Challenges to meeting EDL Needs in Nigeria

106. This illustration regarding nomadic education and the Almajiri gives a fair idea of the types of challenges facing education for the disadvantaged learner in Nigeria. One would have hoped that the situation had improved since the 2006 - 08 Peer Review exercise. Unfortunately, out-of-school numbers are still on the rise. In 2007, over 1 million more children were still out-of-school compared to that of 1999. Over the past decade, Nigeria has made very limited progress towards universal basic education. In 2007, it had 38.7 million children out-of-school — 12% of the world total population. Budget pressures could now hamper efforts to achieve a breakthrough. In 2009, as the global recession lowered oil prices, revenue fell by 35% in real terms. The government was able to increase spending by drawing on a fund used to hold oil revenues generated during periods of high prices. This partial buffer protected the education sector from the steep drop in government revenue in 2009. However, the planned budget for 2010 pointed to lower education spending. Further reductions in overall government spending are planned for 2011. Though it is unclear where the cuts will fall, there is a real risk that the already underfunded education sector will be starved of resources. This would damage education access and quality and exacerbate disparities between regions and social groups⁶.

107. In these conditions, the conclusions reached following the ADEA peer review are still valid and need to be reiterated i.e.:

- In order to improve enrolment, retention and completion of learners from marginalized groups, there is the need for increased sensitization and mobilization of general public and Government structures at all levels;
- Federal Government, the States and other relevant agencies should ensure that teachers of NFE are employed with appropriate terms and conditions of service and paid regularly: too often A&NFE teachers have been abandoning their post as a result of lack of remuneration and incentives, appointments in areas where they are not trained for, erratic payments, etc. For attendance at A&NFE programs to improve, there is a need for improved remuneration for the instructors;
- There should be massive capacity building activities like in-service training, workshops, etc., to up-date A&NFE teachers. This will contribute to the achievement of A&NFE objectives;
- There is a need to redefine and better use alternative education which should be less about developing a path to get unreached learners into the mainstream, and more about exploring and integrating a full range of vocational offerings, as well as livelihood activities that are robust, relevant, flexible and adapted to contemporary settings;
- At the same time, integrating and mainstreaming of alternative education strategies must be pursued with a stronger energy. Tsangaya, Medresa, Ajami teaching, Almajiri and other religious education programs should get a full attention from public authorities, their curricula improved, their teaching/learning processes enhanced and their demographical data integrated to the national database on EFA and MDGs;
- The creation of integrated centers for pastoralist communities must be pursued with a renewed energy as they pull together various programs that address, at the same time, the requirements of the environment, the cattle and the cattle breeders.
- The importance of ICT cannot be over-emphasized. As a result, Government and other stakeholders need to invest in this if the products of A&NFE are to fit into the modern world of work and further education;

⁶ Statistical Table 5; IMF (2009, 2010f); World Bank (2008a).

- The private sector should contribute adequately to the funding of A&NFE because they also enjoy the services of their graduates;
- Cooperation between Nigeria and its educational partners should be reviewed in a way to reposition Non-Formal and Adult Education, putting it at the forefront of the country's effort to attain Education for All;
- Clients need to be involved in program planning and delivery;
- The contradiction between the current capacity of the system to gather and allocate financial means and its difficulty to optimize the utilization of these means for the betterment of Education should be resolved. The 2006-08 peer review revealed that about half of the Nigerian States could not access billions of naira made available by the Federal authorities because of difficulties encountered by these States in seeking to comply with some fund matching provisions set by the regulations.

108. A part of these peer review findings, it is also essential to pay attention to challenges faced by other disadvantaged learners and policies set by the systems to address them in term of policies, planning financing, curriculum reforms, teacher training, etc.

SECTION 4: Discussion of the Findings

Quality Education: fact or fiction?

109. Although ensuring access to education is important, we need to leave no stone unturned in providing an education of the highest quality. Several countries are investing in building the infrastructure but insufficient attention is being paid to the quality of instructions being delivered as well as that of the instructors. The best crafted policies can never be effective in the absence of well trained and qualified teachers. Available data suggests that large proportions of primary school teachers in Africa lack adequate academic qualifications, training and pedagogical content knowledge. At the 2000 World Education Forum held in Dakar, attracting and retaining qualified teachers in the teaching profession emerged as a major threat to achieving the MDG of providing EFA by 2015. The difficulties in attracting and retaining teachers in disadvantaged communities have been highlighted, for example, in a recent World Bank study that focused on 'teachers for rural schools'. This study found that there were particular problems in rural communities associated with teacher housing, the employment of female teachers, teacher utilization, and the communication difficulties related to district management of rural schools. All these provide significant challenges for school leaders working in these environments and have been accentuated by policy drives towards educational decentralization.

110. In Ghana, a 2003 national study of teacher demand and supply reports 'a shortage of 40,000 trained teachers in basic schools (i.e., the first nine years of schooling for ages 6 to 15, comprising six years primary and three years junior secondary), with untrained teachers filling 24,000 of the vacancies'. Further evidence of this problematic area, impacting strongly upon the potential for the leadership of quality education initiatives, is found in the 2007 Global Monitoring Report figures.

111. For example, the proportion of trained teachers in the primary sector in Ghana had fallen from 72% in the school year ending in 1999 to 56% for the school year ending in 2006, whilst the total number of primary school teachers has increased from 80,000 to 88,000 between those two dates. This suggests that the clear impetus towards 'education for all' had lead to a need to ensure that there are increased number of teachers available at primary level, even though there appears to be limited capacity within the country to train them before taking up postings.

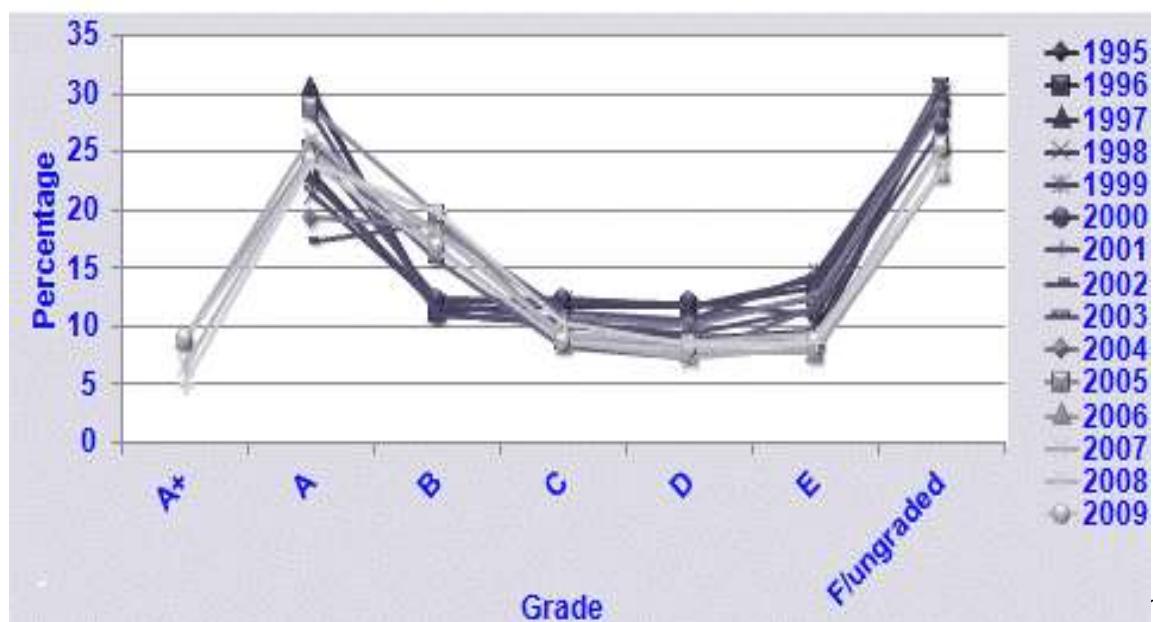
112. The overall figures do hide significant disparities within the country, especially with regard to a rural/urban divide. Strategies for alleviating the teacher shortage in many rural areas have been introduced within the country. In one innovative approach, deprived districts are encouraged to sponsor teacher trainees in exchange for the teacher agreeing to teach in the districts for at least three years (EFA, 2010). While this study does succeed in pointing out the key factors in the attempts to get quality teachers into rural schools, the writer concludes by suggesting that 'the experience with initiatives which use financial incentives to attract candidates into teaching has shown that such inducements alone have very little effect on recruitment and retention (op cit, p 464). The implications that these concerns have for school leadership, especially in rural areas, are clear— inadequately trained or knowledgeable teachers, limited retention incentives, and consequent disillusionment.

113. Kenya School Improvement Program (KENSIP) is another undertaking aiming at improving the quality of primary education in 81 schools, not only by making learning a more meaningful and positive experience for both teachers and students, but also by providing holistic training to everyone involved in the education process – from head teachers to community members and even education officials at the district level. This idea of whole-school change is based on research and experience that shows the overall quality of teaching and learning in schools is more likely to increase when every teacher within a school actively participates and cooperates in the pursuit of shared goals for school-wide development and change.

114. Kenya also supports Madrasa Resource Centers (MRC) which have developed an innovative approach to community based early childhood education, and have increased access and retention rates in primary schools.

115. The Mauritian Government has invested massively in new school infrastructure for both boys and girls. Several state secondary schools have been constructed. However, these were insufficient to improve access to quality education for all, especially for Mauritians coming from poor communities. Reports still highlight the high rate of failures at the end of primary education in student population coming from areas such as Black River, Rodrigues Island, and others places where these people reside. Also, the absence of a proper structure for pre-primary education and lack of provision for remedial education (Bah-Lalya et al., 2007) is noticeable in such areas. As shown in Figure 6, the distribution of grades in English at the end of primary cycle examination follows an abnormal “U” shape which is exactly opposite of a normal curve that governs the distribution of intelligence.

Figure 6. CPE Grade Distribution for School Candidates in English (1995-2010)



⁷ Source : Bah-Lalya (2007) updated

116. The major issue in primary education really seems to be the poor quality of the school teaching /learning processes. The pupil-teacher ratio shown in Table 3 is highly varied and the higher the ratio, the shorter the focus on individual progress.

Table 3: Pupil-teacher ratio-Primary: 2003-2009

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Nigeria	36	36	37	40	46
Ghana	31	32	33	35	32	32	33
Kenya	38	40	45	44	46	47	47
Namibia	32	33	31	31	30	29	30
Senegal	46	43	42	39	34	36	35
Mauritius	23	22	22	22	22	22	22

117. Directly connected to this is the poor education of the majority of the teachers and their inability to provide the quality instructions.

Critical elements to address the needs of the disadvantaged?

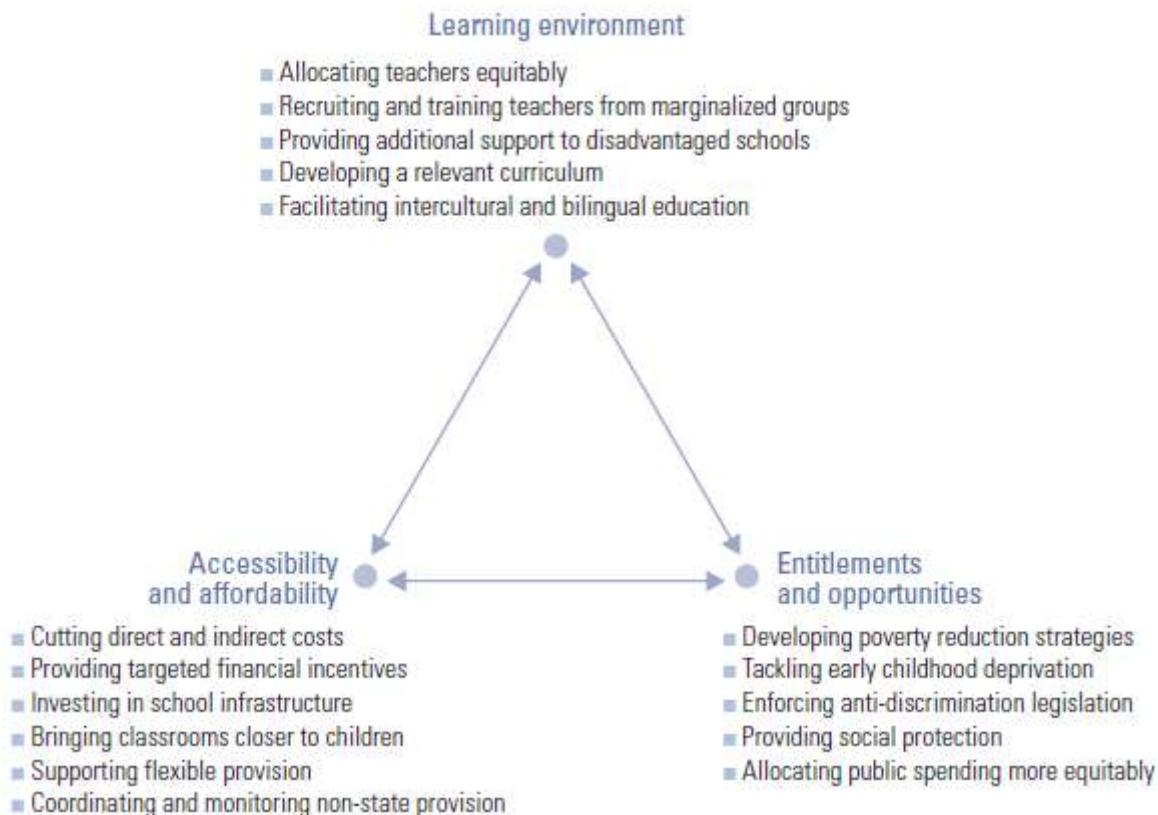
118. UNESCO has proposed through its Inclusive Education Triangle a scheme that delineates the factors to take into consideration in order to address marginalization, namely: (I) The Learning Environment, (II) Accessibility and Affordability; and (III) Entitlement and Opportunities. These are shown in the diagram below.

119.

120. Each level has a number of identified policy actions that supports the education of the marginalized learner. Successful execution of any of these policy options on a targeted condition would provide the EDL with basic skills that would enable him or her engage effectively in a national system and thus hopefully escapes the condition of marginalization and the poverty circle.

121. The UNICEF – World Bank “Strategic Choices of Education Reform” model has lent support to this UNESCO Inclusive Education Triangle by situating various interventions within the frameworks of EFA and the MDGs. However, it highlighted the critical role of leadership and management in driving the process of reform in any inclusive education endeavor.

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Source: EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2010: Reaching the marginalized

122. In the same line of thought, observations made with the six surveyed countries suggest that taken alone, the teaching learning processes are found to constitute, by themselves, a critical category influencing education for the disadvantaged. This category could include factors such as:

- The capacity of the system to effectively identify, quantify, locate and take charge of the disadvantaged learners;
- The capacity of school managers to create, at the classroom level, the kind of special environment conducive to learning for the disadvantaged;
- the modes utilized to effectively assess learner's achievements and provide corrective measures;
- The nature and quality of instructional materials;
- The capacity of the system to effectively integrate and use new technologies (such as mobile phones and alike) to support and enhance education for the disadvantaged; and
- Other activities related to classroom management.

123. In any event, the program-types are within the realm of both formal and non-formal education and trainings whose curricula are broad and specific, with each addressing specific needs of the disadvantaged learners within a national system of educational delivery. The curricula here are targeted at the early childhood, children, youth and

adults; girls and women; skilled and unskilled. The organization of learning assumes varied postures as some are highly formalized while others are informal.

124. The quality of knowledge and skills acquired in institutions of learning and training for the disadvantaged learners vary remarkably because of numerous factors including geographical locations, resource availability, the management of teaching / learning processes, etc. Consequently, some can be adjudged as high in quality service delivery while others are far-off the mark, thereby exacerbating the condition of disadvantaged.

Children with special needs: who cares?

125. In 2006, a National Policy and Strategy Document for the Special Education Needs (SEN) sector was developed to respond to both the specific and emerging educational needs of all the children concerned. The document lays emphasis on the need to adopt a child-centered pedagogical approach as well as a flexible and adapted curriculum that will help each child to develop his or her full potential. The MoEHR does not publish any data relating to Special Needs children, but the Ministry's own internal data show a total of 1,292 children (61% boys) enrolled in all SEN schools in 2007, SEN Day Care Centers and Government Units, whereas it is estimated that the total number of SEN children in Mauritius was around 3,000. On this basis children currently being catered for in SEN schools/units represent only around 43% of the estimated total population of children with special educational needs and whose needs are not currently being met.

126. Without well trained and motivated teachers, without access to adequate pedagogical materials and without any capacity to teach in mother tongue languages at primary levels, the impact of increased enrolment will be limited.

127. Legal provisions can play a role in overcoming discrimination and realizing the right to education.

128. The amendment brought to the Education Act in Mauritius makes education compulsory until the age of 16. This strengthens measures to curb school drop-outs.

Females: the most marginalized among the marginalized

129. In Namibia, the extreme poverty in which the majority of people, especially women, find themselves is primarily due to the wide income disparity stemming from passed apartheid policies. A decline in household crop production and food availability, together with a reduction in cash income are further increasing the poverty of many households. While many factors contribute to the disadvantaged status of women, the most direct constraint to entry to the labor market and to positions of influence in society remains, the limited access to education for women. This state of affairs was aggravated by the general inadequacy of education that independent Namibia inherited. Though the constitution does not mandate quotes to ensure the adequate representation of women in elective bodies, it creates a framework that recognizes the marginalization that women have experienced and the discrimination they have suffered and requires that measures be taken to redress these substantive inequalities.

Bringing the disadvantaged learner to school or the other way around?

130. With the first types of educational approaches (i.e., mainstreaming the disadvantaged learner), are included initiatives like those experimented in Kenya and Namibia. In these two countries, where sizeable numbers of nomads exist, governments have been providing alternative education for the marginalized through various means. The Kenya Nomadic Education Policy of 2008 for example, provided an innovative curriculum which infused the pastoralists traditional knowledge into it. Also, in Kenya the boarding school concept has been introduced with a view to retain learners. The success of this project has a lot to do with adequate provision grants and modification of the formalized nature of schooling to fit the nomadic lifestyle.
131. This is in addition to recruiting teachers, especially females, from among the nomadic groups.
132. Several initiatives implemented in Kenya and Namibia also belongs to the second approach which entails bringing education to the door steps of the disadvantaged. This is advocated wherever the livelihood of the targeted learners requires strong individual and social specialization that could not easily accommodate with what could be considered as ordinary life settings. These programs have in common their flexibility, their focus on specific needs and their teaching models centered on particular client groups, especially the nomadic groups.
133. The Mobile School Program for example has been institutionalized in both Kenya and Namibia for children of the nomad pastoralists and hunter-gatherers. This practice has become widespread in the two countries, and is being explained as a key factor in school growth and improved children enrolment and retention.
134. Recently, these two countries are also experimenting with radio and mobile phone programs to reach nomadic learners and complement the mobile school programs.
135. The same concerns for flexibility and adaptability and focus to the life conditions of the clients have made Nigeria to recently launch, through its Nomadic Education Commission, the Model Nomadic Education Centers program model, mentioned earlier in the report. This new initiative addresses together issues of the education of the children and adult learners through more relevant curriculum, care of animals and the health and economic well-being of the marginalized communities. It is thus multi-sectoral in approach as well as community-driven. So far, 15 of such centers have been created in three phases, with plan to up-scale the model.
136. In Ghana, Action Aid, a British civil society organization, together with Government and other local partners, have initiated very innovative approaches to basic education in favor of children from isolated and marginalized communities, especially the Fulbe pastoralists in the northern part of the country. These groups have proven to be hard-to-reach because of their livelihood activities and other cultural factors. With the program, Action Aid focused on the content of learning (i.e., reading, writing and numeracy skills) to facilitate bridging to the formal school system. Class schedules are made flexible enough to fit the pastoral activities, all in an attempt to make education more accessible to the nomads.
137. In this collaborative endeavor, Government continuously encourages civil society organizations to provide such forms of education while it mainly concerns itself with quality control. It also provides grants in-aid to these schools, since government has evolved a policy of supporting schools via capitation grants in the spirit of the country's free and compulsory basic education.

138. In the two approaches listed above (i.e., the disadvantaged learner going to school or school going to this specific learner through out-of-school initiatives), trends show that an impressive result has been recorded through increase in number of nomadic schools, as well as student enrolment, retention and completion from learners of targeted groups. The trends also show an improvement in enrolment of adult illiterates generally and the female in particular. Furthermore improved animal and human health and practices have been recorded.



The future of education for the disadvantaged child learner is contingent upon the African country's capacity to strengthen education programs for his/her parents. Here a mother taking her child to school in a poor Namibian neighborhood. (Source : Coll I.B-L)

139. Unfortunately, the review of these programs also indicates that considerable challenges remain unmet for the educational needs of these groups to be fully satisfied. Governments of the six surveyed countries have variously appreciated the need to address the challenge of the educationally marginalized segments of their societies by putting in place specific policy framework and programs for the education of disadvantaged learners. The programs are numerous and varied in view of the existing differentiated segments of learners and the complexity of their needs and aspirations

Policies to reach the unreachable and to retain them in the system: well designed or shooting in the dark?

140. Several countries have over the years initiated a number of education reform programs in order to provide quality education to each and every citizen irrespective of race, gender, belief, cast, socio-economic status and place of residence. If some of the policies were well designed and very effective, others failed to achieve their objectives. For instance in Ghana, a fundamental problem however is that the numerous development initiatives such as the seven-Year Development Plan (1963/1964-1969/1970), the Economic Recovery Program (ERP) (1983-1987), Ghana -Vision 2020 (1996) and Ghana Poverty Reduction Strategies I and II [GPRS I and II](2003 – 2005 and 2006 – 2009) respectively (motivated by popular economic models of development) that have been crafted and implemented in an attempt to improve the conditions of the people have failed to make the desired impact due to their top-down orientation. Such development initiatives have focused on economic development at the expense of the socio-ecological factors leaving the environment devastated and the people socially alienated. In an economy where majority of the people are engaged in agriculture initiatives to combat poverty which fail to recognize the role and the accumulated experience of the local people can hardly succeed (Domfeh and Bawole, 2009).

141. A similar observation is made in Kenya. Despite the fact that recent steps to promote Free Primary Education (FPE) in the country have been successful in increasing pupil enrolment countrywide, insufficient resources and preparation at the school level have meant that this increase has overwhelmed the system. This justifiably causes concern that traditionally marginalized groups are now at even greater risk of being underserved.

142. In fact, following the 1961 Addis Ababa Conference of African States, and after its independence, several Commissions, Committees and Taskforces have been set up to reform the Kenyan education system. The first Commission developed the Ominde Report related Kenya Education Commission that aimed at reforming the colonial education system in order to have a more responsive system. Recent policy initiatives include The Koech Report in 2000 that aimed at having an education system that would facilitate national unity, mutual social responsibility, accelerated industrial and technological development, life-long learning, and adaptation in response to changing circumstances. Several other initiatives in the wake of EFA and MDG's have been taken. As a result the net enrollment ratio at primary level has increased from 63% in 1999 to 82% in 2009 (EFA, 2010). Together with USAID, the Aga Khan Foundation and civil society Kenyan education authorities also embarked on the Education for Marginalized Children in Kenya (EMACK) Project which sought to address educational challenges faced by marginalized populations. EMACK focused its activities in the chronically impoverished and water scarce Coastal and North Eastern provinces. Emphasis has been placed on reaching these geographic populations that have traditionally fared less well in terms of their educational achievement in Kenya, as well as on the individuals within these populations who are the most vulnerable children with special learning needs, girls and children affected by HIV, poverty, famine or other difficult circumstances. The project works in partnership with government and the local non-governmental organization (NGO) sector to find innovative ways of addressing educational challenges. Special attention is also paid to Qu'ranic schools which had demonstrated its ability to reach some of the most marginalized groups. The five year's program provides both secular and religious Muslim teachers who travel with the Nomads as well as school materials and other means. Normally, these teachers are

drawn from the local community and receive training under the program. In this manner both formal and religious study on the tenets of Qu’ran is achieved.

143. Positive discrimination is vital if we want the disadvantaged children to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. An initiative similar to that of EMACK in Mauritius has been the setting up of the Zones d’Education Prioritaires (ZEP) aimed at addressing educational failure. It also brings schools closer to marginalized communities. Its strategy is based on the premise that positive reinforcement is required to create favorable learning conditions for children mostly in the less developed regions. In the broader perspective, this approach aims at combating social inequalities by providing equal opportunities to all primary school children of the country. Although progress has been slow in terms of pupil achievement as measured by the Certificate of Primary Education (CPE) pass rate, ZEP schools have, on the other hand, managed to produce some good practices such as holistic educational approaches, school-community partnership, active parent involvement in the educational process, fund-raising models for school improvement projects and so on.

144. Perhaps, one of the most interesting outcomes of the philosophy upon which the education methodology for ZEP schools is based is the social outcomes it has achieved. In the case of ZEP schools, what needs to be removed is the negative branding/labeling but without losing the added value it has provided to the education system. In other words, the spotlight with regard ZEP schools must be taken away from ‘failure’ by promoting measures to enhance the ‘successes’ of ZEP students and schools.

145. In Kenya, as part of its strategy to address the development needs of the region, the new ministry was influential in developing a Nomadic Education Policy, drafted in 2008. Innovations include incorporating traditional knowledge in the curriculum, providing grants to mobile schools, establishing feeder schools within local communities, modifying the formal system to suit the nomadic calendar, recruiting teachers (particularly females) from nomadic areas through affirmative action, and using radio and mobile phones for outreach.

146. Namibia provides another striking example. According to the Education Act (2001) six years of primary school attendance for children between the age of six and sixteen was made compulsory. School fees were not allowed at primary level. A learner-centered education was introduced as a foundation policy for the new education system in Namibia toward Education for All, expressed in the four major goals for education:

- Access
- Equity
- Quality
- Democracy

147. Considering the vast amounts of money spent on Education, the sector is assessed not to be very efficient. Namibia ranks among the top ten countries in the world considering the percentage of money spent on education, but ranks 120 in the average outcome of well educated students. Some major reasons for the poor quality outcome in primary and secondary education could be identified as follows:

- Historically, the Namibian educational system was highly fragmented, and allocation of resources was segregated on the basis of race and ethnicity. With the ineptitude of basic formal education, it therefore follows that Namibia has a high

rate of illiteracy. Although this problem is largely corrected, some stigmas still remain;

- The schooling curricula have not been very ambitious before and in the first years after independence, but this has fortunately changed even if some negative effects persist.
- Namibia is a large country with a very low population density in most parts. Therefore in some regions, schools are still very far away for some people and transportation is not provided. In these conditions, some parents have problem sending their children to school each day and it is hard to enforce compulsory school attendance in such a big country.
- Special problems occur to the few left nomad people in Namibia, especially for nomadic Himba and San people. It is often impossible to send their children to school without giving them away to a school home. As in other sectors, transportation remains an essential problem in Namibia. This problem is particularly acute in some areas such as the Kunene region which is situated in the north-western corner of the country and is covered by the Namib Desert along the west coast. It is home to the semi-nomadic people of Namibia. The Ministry has had to introduce mobile schools in this region to cater for the children of the nomadic community. It has a total of 51 schools, with 14,934 learners taught by 557 teachers.
- Even though the constitution forbids fees for primary schooling, school actually is not for free in Namibia. Students have to pay for school uniforms, school feeding, learning materials and so on. The amount of these indirect school fees differ between the schools, but the very poor struggle to even afford the cheapest ones, many just cannot, especially in times of rising unemployment.
- Due to HIV/AIDS and several poverty-related reasons, the number of orphans is very high in Namibia. A lot of them are taken care of by family members and children homes, but still there are many in the streets of the informal settlements around Windhoek-Katutura and other cities which don't go to school.
- An insufficient teacher-student ratio and lack of quality learning material for all (especially in languages of the smaller minority groups) was a big challenge in the past. Even though government and donors were able to at least reduce this problem during the last ten years, it still remains a problem, especially in some of the poorer rural areas.
- Language remains a very crucial issue in Namibian schools. Schooling is done in local languages for the first years and a shift is made around Grade Four. On the one hand, students often struggle hard to switch to English after the 4th grade and their overall performance suffers from these difficulties. On the other hand, many teachers don't even enforce the turn to English due to their own poor language skills. However, final tests have to be taken in English and students not accustomed to the language fail or do poorly.

148. Abolishing fees plays a pivotal role in retaining children at school. However, the free education policy must be well designed otherwise it will fail to have the desired impact. For instance, when Ghana introduced a policy eliminating fees in 1996, there was initially only a limited increase in enrolment: schools faced with a loss of revenue introduced informal fees of their own. In response, the government introduced school grants to make up for the lost fee income – a policy intervention that led to rising enrolment levels (EFA, 2010). Several other countries, including Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique and the United Republic of Tanzania, replaced schools' former user-fee

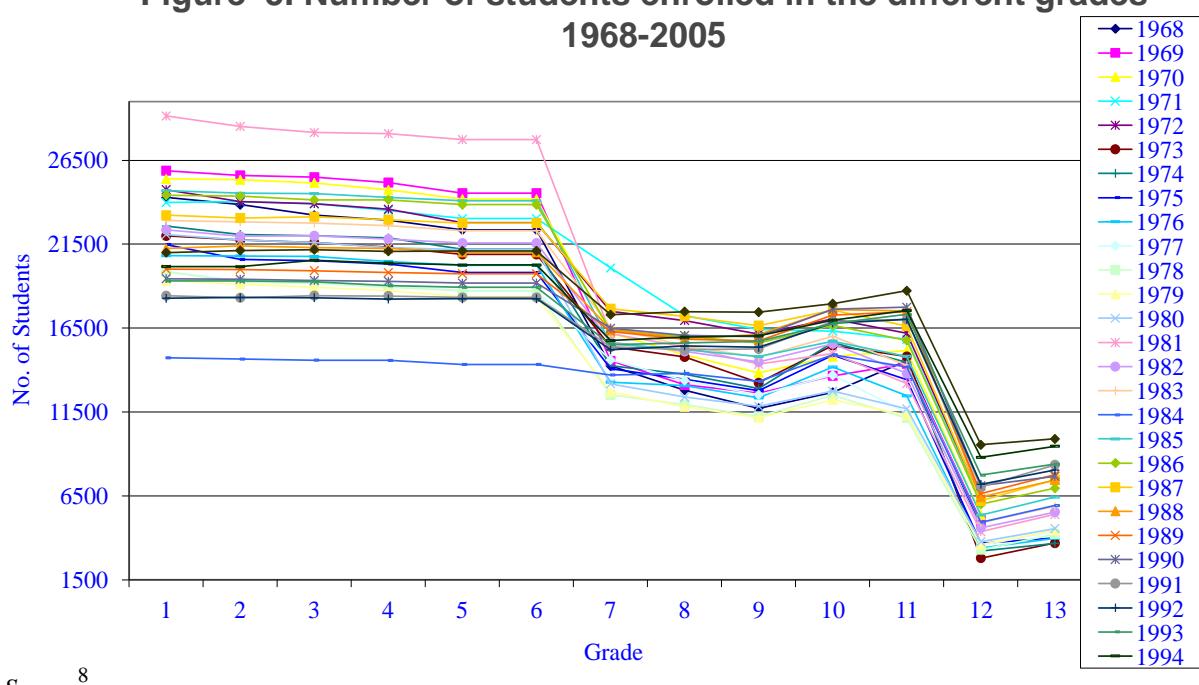
revenue with grants. In addition to reducing pressure on household budgets, school grants give governments a vehicle for targeting disadvantaged groups and regions.

149. In Mauritius, poverty and its corollaries, vulnerability and socioeconomic exclusion, are closely related to the country's historical and social context. This was the environment in which modern education was built and expanded. It evolved from a completely private enterprise to a national education system. The government's impetus for free primary education for all, which started in the 1940s, resulted in near universal enrolment at primary level, long before primary education was made compulsory, in 1982. Education is free at both primary and secondary levels. At one of the two State universities, namely, University of Mauritius, students have free education up to the first degree level. However, a large majority of the students take private tuition both at primary and secondary levels. The children from the poor families are very often unable to afford the private tuitions and are therefore disadvantaged as compared to their peers from higher income facilities who now take two or more tuitions for each subject. Despite education is free, the Mauritian education system has much difficulty in retaining the children as shown in Figure 5.

150. In fact, out of every hundred children joining the education system at Grade 1 (age 5 years), only twenty-seven succeed at the Higher School Certificate (age 18 years).

151. Providing all the learning materials to the learners is important. Much of the early policy thrust within Ghana had been on issues related to school resources, especially textbooks. Pupils' access to, and use of, appropriate textbooks has been seen as a critical factor in quality education implementation. The Ghanaian Education Service textbook policy requires each basic school pupil to access a textbook in each of the core subjects (English, Mathematics and Science). Yet, lack of adequate textbooks continues to be a problem. Mauritius does not only offer free textbooks to all primary level students but also provide free transport to all children up to completion of first degree so as to enable every student residing in remote areas to have access to education. The Mauritian Government provides a grant of Rs200 per student per month to all those attending the last year of the pre-primary education. Orphans, widows and a large majority of those requiring special needs also receive a non-contributory monthly pension. Children whose parents are recipients of social aid also receive a financial allowance as well as exams fees are either free or subsidized.

**Figure 5. Number of students enrolled in the different grades
1968-2005**



Source⁸

152. Policies are often influenced by international organizations. For instance, from 1999 to 2008, stronger policies backed by increased public spending helped lower the number of children out-of-school in Ghana by 400,000 and increase the net enrolment ratio in primary school from 60% to 77%. In 2008, a rising fiscal deficit and the economic slowdown triggered a crisis in public finance that now threatens to reverse these gains. Under an IMF program, Ghana had to embark on a drastic course of fiscal adjustment. Overall spending was cut by 8% in real terms in 2009, but cuts have been far deeper in education. The education budget was cut by around 30%, and basic education spending fell by 18%, equivalent to the cost of schooling 653,000 children. Planned education spending rose in 2010 but remained below 2008 levels, and it is unclear whether the budget allocation will be delivered in full. Ghana's agreement with the IMF called for continued reductions in the fiscal deficit, and further cuts in total government spending are projected for 2011. There are safeguards for social sector spending and plans to increase school grants and provision of free textbooks, but it is too early to know whether these commitments will be met. Ghana's experience underlines the limitations of focusing solely on whether education budgets are cut. From an Education for All perspective, what counts is alignment of financing with policies aimed at removing bottlenecks to universal primary education and other goals. Estimates indicate that primary education spending needs to increase by 9% annually if universal primary education is to be achieved in Ghana by 2015. With an annual growth in government expenditure projected at only 4% in the next five years, it appears unlikely that the 2015 targets will be met without increased aid (EPDC and UNESCO, 2009); IMF, 2010f).

153. Policy statements are not sufficient. We need to ensure that the government is fully committed and provide continuous support. In 2010, Mauritius set up the Ministry of Social Integration and Empowerment, under the purview of the Deputy Prime Minister, as another step forward, with regard to the eradication of poverty. Combining social integration and empowerment is a winning formula and if programs are well

⁸ Source: Bah-Lalya and al (2007) Updated

implemented, thousands of women will not only break cycles of poverty, but will also be able to obtain equal access and opportunities to contribute and benefit from the formal and informal sectors. The aim of this Ministry is to take a leading role to the creation of an inclusive and more equitable society through greater social justice and sustainable human development. Its mission is to be the driving force in the eradication of absolute poverty and social exclusion and to mobilize support to empower the vulnerable and deprived with a view to improving their quality of life in a sustainable manner. It provides support, to children from very deprived areas in terms of learning materials like stationeries and so on.

Financing programs for the Disadvantaged Learner

154. Huge financial resources are required to bring about the needed change in this sub-sector of education. Notwithstanding the general cuts in budgets to education in all the countries under consideration because of the challenging economic environment occasioned by global economic downturn, other sources are being mobilized to provide support to the programs of education to the disadvantaged learners in Africa. International Development Partners, especially those in UN system Agencies, multilateral and bilateral organizations foundation and civil society organizations provide succor to countries to support their various educational programs to educational disadvantaged learners. Again, there is a limit to how far agencies could provide support in view of their deferential philosophies and approaches to aiding developing countries and above all their individual capacities to address large national issues and concerns. In spite of this, partnership has been expanded to capture more national and international stakeholders in support of education to the disadvantaged learners.

155. In the case of Nigeria, although cuts in educational budget have been a recurrent phenomenon in educational financing in last decade, other sources have been creatively introduced as a safety measure, especially in the basic education sub-sector. This includes the Education Trust Fund, the Universal Basic Education Fund and Funds derivable from Millennium Development Goals. These sources put together amount to a significant envelope for funding basic education in Nigeria. The composite funds from these sources finance teacher-in-service training, other capacity building efforts of the three UBE agencies, provision of infrastructure, learning materials, equipment, advocacy, mass mobilization, etc.

156. In the area of policy, this study has clearly demonstrated that many relevant policies have been churned-out by the respective national governments in support of education of the disadvantaged groups in Africa. These policies have been informed by several international conventions and protocols that countries have been signatories to. The policies are not comprehensive enough to address all areas of educational marginalization at once, to enable sector aside planning and strategic funding to take place. Indeed they are developed piece-meal. As of now, some programs are highly favored than others, since the so-called favorable ones receive increased visibility and funding. The policies and frameworks at the formal level in basic education receive heightened interest and by the same token are highly patronized by the IDPs and the stakeholders at the detriment of literacy, non-formal education and vocational training.

157. As of today, only a few countries have specific policies on vocational and technical education and training at the basic level. On the sample considered, these include Mauritius, Kenya and Ghana. Post-secondary vocational and technical education receives disproportionate attention and funding, relative to those programs at the lower

level, whether at formal or non-formal. Also, countries hardly infuse deliberately the philosophy and principles of education for sustainable development into their national framework. In order for education for sustainable development to become a reality in Africa, specific policies must be in place to enable that to happen. As education in its narrow sense, which is not linked to livelihood and political, economic, ecological and social development of their respective nations would continue to be distorted in the overall interest of sustainable development.

158. With regard, to the countries moving forward the achievement of the relevant goals of EFA and MDGs, the general picture is that of mix-feeling. As previously mentioned, an early start in education is particularly important for children from disadvantaged families. Nevertheless, the case studies indicate that national policies regarding ECD and childhood provision continue to be marked by neglect, especially during implementation. Consequently, participation of children in this form of education is generally low. However, there is an appreciable improvement in Ghana, Kenya and Mauritius, in contrast to what is obtained in Nigeria and Senegal, where targets are unlikely to be met.

159. Actually, as general rule, even policies that are enacted are hardly implemented because of several factors including limited resources, limited manpower, weak political wills and other factors beyond the sole control of Education. This is particularly true as it regards the Universal Basic Education objectives.

160. The case studies have shown that many marginalized children and youth are not in school, although their numbers have fallen. Nigeria still has millions to contend with although there are concerted efforts to address it through a variety of policy instruments and framework. Beyond the policies themselves, the issue is how long will that materialize in order to meet the target is what cannot be ascertained.

161. As for the learning needs of youth and adults, the case studies indicate that for Senegal, Nigeria and Ghana there is still considerable room for improvement. Generally, youth literacy rates are much more improved than those of the adults. Thus, adult literacy remains the most neglected of all education goals. Ghana, Kenya and Nigeria are moving up the literacy ladder slowly, while Namibia and Mauritius are enjoying a high level of adult literacy rate.

162. Relevant policies on gender parity in Nigeria, Mauritius and Namibia have great impact in advancing more favor of females at pre-primary and primary levels. Gross enrolment at secondary level in Nigeria is still very worrisome with figures for Kenya and Namibia showing high drop-out rate at secondary level.

163. As far as the issue of quality is concerned a lot needs to be done. The fact that children drop-out or stay longer in school has implications for what they might have acquired in school. The pupil/teacher ratio has not been improved appreciably. Many schools lack quality teachers as many of those on the ground lack the requisite qualification and right disposition. Deliberate policy must be in place to address this. The new Teacher Education Policy of the Federal Government of Nigeria tries to address both the pre-service and the in-service teacher education curriculum. Implementation of this policy is yet to effectively take-off. What is most needed is a deliberate policy to attract people to the teaching profession and good funding support to institutions that train them. Issues of their remuneration and condition of service continue to be a major challenge, and must be addressed if quality education for EDLs is to be achieved. Huge investment in education is very much required to meet the goal UPE, especially on teachers and

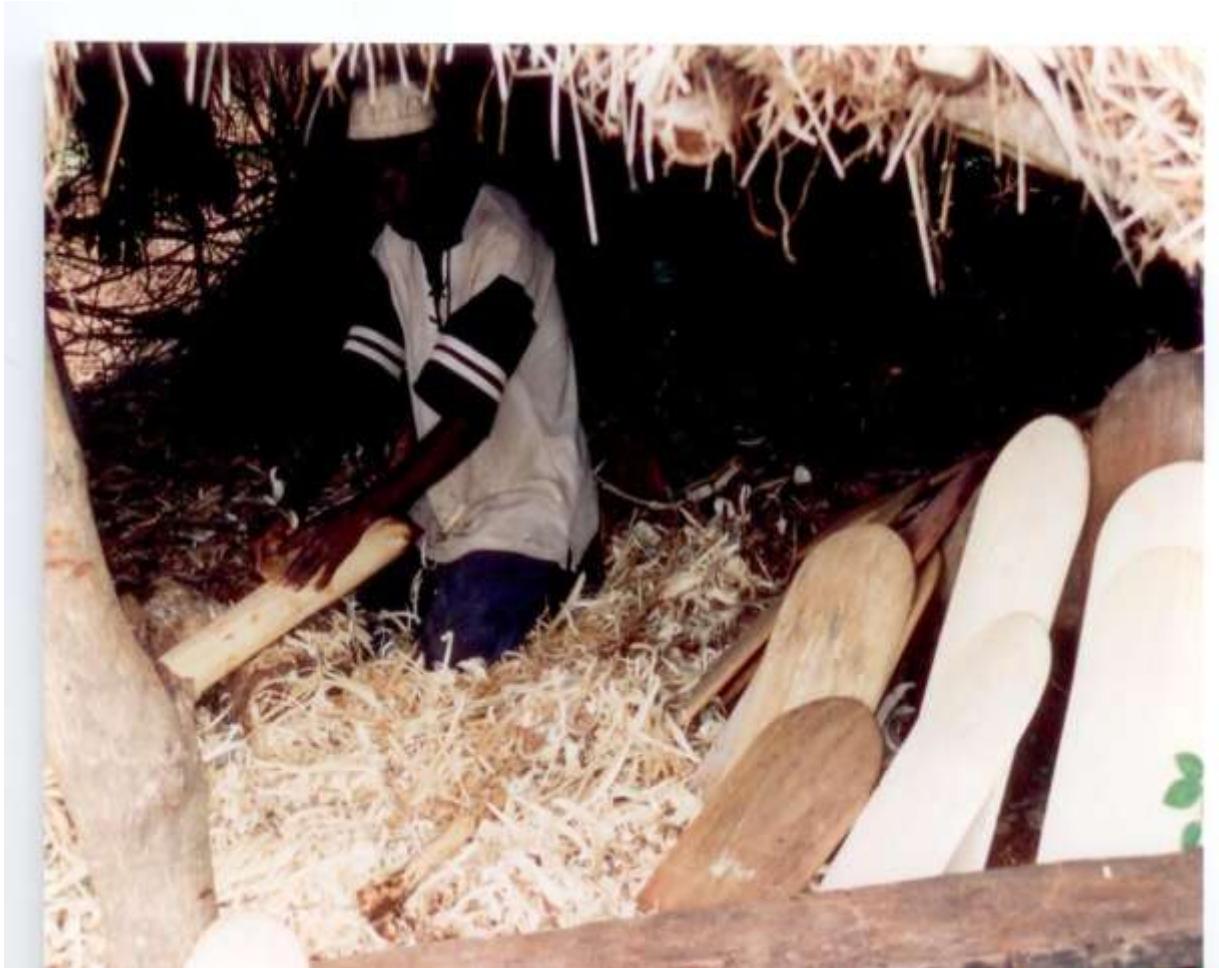
classrooms. Between 2011 and 2015 the number of new teachers needed in most of these countries is equal to the current teaching force.

164. The Government of Mauritius in its Budget Speech 2008/2009 announced the setting up of the Second Chance Program, funded by the Human Resource, Knowledge and Art Development Fund managed by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources. It aims to provide basic numeracy & literacy skills to those who have dropped out-of-school and orient these young people to a vocational training program. It includes a strong emphasis on life training skills and provides psychological and social back up.

165. The objectives of this training program are to make the trainees:-

- Appreciate the place of English/French in their personal / professional life;
- Understand the importance of acquiring English and French literacy;
- Understand and access information/derive pleasure from aural texts in the target language;
- Speak and express their needs, thoughts, ideas, options and feelings using the target language confidently;
- Communicate appropriately in the target language;
- Read a variety of texts of appropriate level to access information;
- Read with interest and for pleasure;
- Write in a variety of contexts and for a range of purposes pertinent to their needs;
- Use writing as a medium for their personal/professional communication;
- Manage their emotions;
- Develop appositive attitude;
- Be psychologically prepared for the world of work; and
- Use ICT tools to perform simple to more complex reading, writing and calculation tasks.

166. The curriculum is made up of the ‘Life Skills Management’; ‘Basic Literacy and Numeracy’ and ‘Advanced Literacy and Numeracy’ components. Candidates who successfully complete the course will be awarded a “Certificate in Literacy and Numeracy”. To qualify, candidates must be under 21 but over 16 years old, not in full time education and not in full time employment. Candidates are encouraged to follow the training program through incentives like monthly stipend, refund of bus fare, free learning materials, free psychological support service. 333 trainees have enrolled as at June 2011 in 12 training centers in Mauritius and Rodrigues and they are being guided by 13 trainers.



Traditional approaches to education delivery must also be taken on board, fully researched and mainstreamed in order to effectively address the need of the disadvantaged learner and attain EFA goals: Here a villager from a remote rural area is preparing the wooden tablets utilized by children to learn how to write and read Arabic lessons. (Source : Coll I. B-L)

SECTION 5: Lessons Learnt

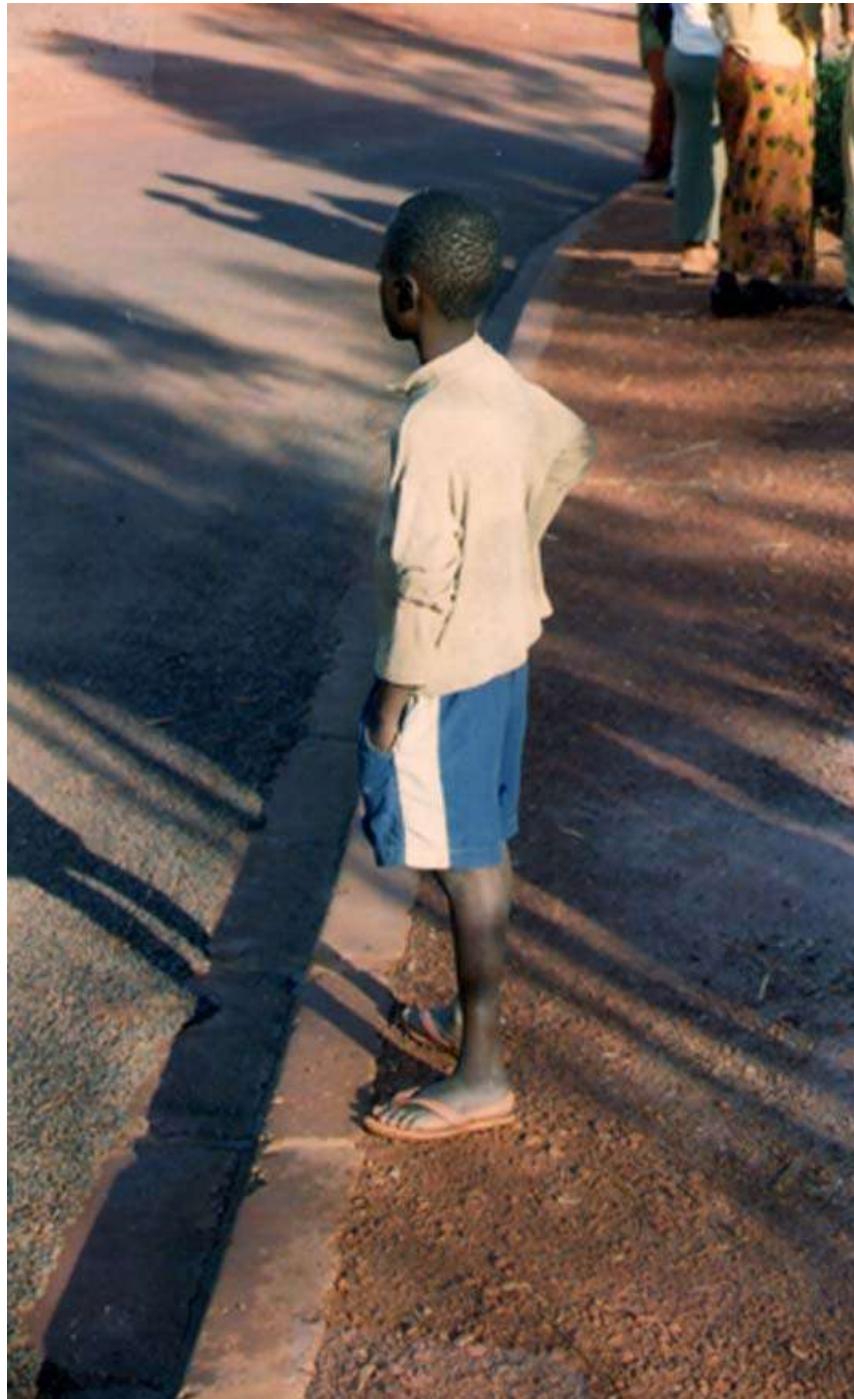
167. On the basis of the discussion of the six country reports and the analysis that followed it, it is possible to identify some key lessons worthy of noting. These include the following:

- 1) It has been clearly demonstrated in these case studies that various programs that have been designed and implemented for the disadvantaged groups in Africa constitute viable mechanisms for ensuring the attainment of universal primary education, addressing the challenge of educational marginalization of adolescent and adult illiterates, promoting gender equality and empowering the disadvantaged, in particular women;
- 2) The case studies further underscores the importance of comprehensive and flexible educational systems that would provide to everyone the opportunity to develop his/her potentials, given his/her objective conditions and aspirations;
- 3) Beyond the education sector however, the case studies demonstrate a strong relationship existing between strategic changes and sector's reforms: carrying out education promotion in the absence of overall economic development changes 'has been a mistake'. The Mauritius and Ghana case studies among others clearly show that one cannot set effective policy in favor of EDL without engaging into countrywide reforms;
- 4) The study highlights that country membership of international organizations is, in itself, not a sufficient condition for them to address the challenges of marginalization in educational participation. Rather, they must faithfully adopt all the instruments and conventions aimed at eliminating all forms of marginalization and provide the necessary policy measures, institutional framework and funding to ensure effective program implementation;
- 5) The marginalized learners are so varied and their needs and aspirations so complex, that education offers must be further widened and out-of-school pathways to learning further explored. In this regard, Ghana, Kenya, Namibia, Nigeria, and Senegal propose very interesting out-of-school programs that need to be assessed, and lessons drawn from such exercises to be made available to other African countries;
- 6) The study clearly shows that funding challenge is a key issue in the education of the disadvantaged learners in all the cases examined. Limited budgetary allocation to education in general and the sub-sector in particular is a common feature in all the cases. And, because of administrative red tapes, at least in one case where funds have been effectively allocated, the problem has been how to effectively access such funds and be able to utilize them for the betterment of the disadvantaged learner's conditions;
- 7) The EFA MDG "Revolution" has a significant impact on the marginalized. In almost all the six countries surveyed, facilitating access and equity has resulted in significant increase of student populations, which has significant subsequent impact on the availability of resources, as well as on the availability of qualified teaching staff, adequate infrastructures and sufficient equipments. Under these conditions, the tendency is to care for the many and neglect specific programs that deal with smaller disadvantaged entities. This has been complicated lately by economic downfalls and the fact that programs for the disadvantaged call for more resources than the average;

- 8) Most programs specially designed for the marginalized, will, sooner or later, face the challenge of matching quality education with stigmas attached to education for disadvantaged people. In countries where ZEP (zones d'Education Prioritaire") programs are implemented and extra resources are voted for failing schools, there is a perception that the quality of education delivery is poor while contributions of taxpayers to the programs are judged as high, forgetting that the main added value of such programs could lie in their social benefits. Thus, the issue is how to “reduce the branding without losing the added value” of these programs;
- 9) It has been demonstrated, beyond reasonable doubt, that International Development Partners (IDPs) have been active collaborators, with governments, people and civil society organizations, in resolving issues of educationally disadvantaged groups. They have been actively engaged in advocacy and mobilization, capacity building, policy design and implementation as well as provision of learning infrastructure and materials. Initiatives such as the Nigerian Government one, which involves the private sector through public-private partnership, are a reassuring way of fund mobilization for the EDGs;
- 10) It is obvious that effort at mobilizing and sensitizing the educationally disadvantaged learners create the needed awareness for the group to be engaged in learning and training for their personal benefit and that of their communities;
- 11) Most disadvantaged groups are out of the realm of the means set for the average learner. Teaching them requires additional training of facilitators, more teaching materials, and innovative pedagogical techniques. However, disadvantaged people are the less visible and the voiceless. In these conditions resourcing the programs designed for them, providing their teachers/facilitators with the required training is quite a challenge;
- 12) Attention to what happens in learning sites is critical. Individual and social stigmas could be strongly felt at the level of the classroom and other learning sites. If teachers and education managers do not pay careful attention to it, these stigmas could lead to major psychological and sociological damages and hamper the ability of disadvantaged learner to attend and perform well;
- 13) The studies have shown that although centralized planning and management of programs for the educationally marginalized groups are necessary for a good coordination and use of scarce resources, programs for the disadvantaged works better, are more advantageous and produce more desired results in basic education when they are decentralized and management of learning is operated from local levels;
- 14) Educational policies for the disadvantaged learners have to be inclusive in both process and content to enable it become acceptable by all so as to engender active participation;
- 15) Translating the vision of inclusive education into practice requires creating learning environment that gives priority to those who are educationally disadvantaged;
- 16) The case studies have shown that for education of the disadvantaged learners to serve as an instrument of liberation, empowerment and self-reliance, there is the need for a diversified curriculum that will energize individuals to actualize their potentials. This entails well motivated teaching force and dynamic pedagogical/andragogical strategies that will promote reflective thinking through awareness and involvement of countries for meaningful and sustainable development;
- 17) It also requires careful monitoring strategies of both human and material resources;
- 18) The Mauritius, Nigeria, Namibia, and Senegal case studies demonstrate that sensitivity to language and local culture issues is major. It encompasses several aspects including taking

into consideration the languages used by minorities in the mother tongue policies (at least for the basic education level), as well as the ways European and Arabic languages are integrated in the curriculum as medium of teaching. In some of the cases studied, people from the disadvantaged groups may be willing to bargain their own language as a teaching/learning medium for an internationally recognized language (English, French, Hausa, etc.) if they perceive an overall long-term benefit for their offspring and themselves;

- 19) Meeting the needs of the disadvantaged necessitates aggressive and multipronged policies that fight poverty and, at the same time set the conditions for effective integration of the learner into mainstream society. In Mauritius, combining social integration and empowerment through various trainings including in TVET has proven to be a winning formula to break the cycle of poverty, encourage and assist vulnerable groups to undertake income earning activities, widen the circle of opportunities for the empowerment of the vulnerable groups, provide more social justice, and encourage quality life in a sustainable manner;
- 20) Changing technology and work organization call for continuous upgrading of knowledge and skills, in a lifelong learning environment. TVET programs are well equipped to fill this function;
- 21) The issue of curriculum management is another serious challenge as most positive policies favoring the disadvantaged are diverted from their original intents during implementation. The Ghanaian case, where the no-fees policy led to heavy indirect cost is very illustrative;
- 22) Mismatch between school and the world of work could be addressed through various means including the development of adequate TVET programs as it happened with Mauritius.



*Which way to go?
What future for the
Educationally
Disadvantaged
African Learner?
(Source: Coll I. B-L)*

SECTION 6: Policy Recommendations

168. The purpose of this study is to contribute to the development of cost-effective strategies to deliver education and training to the poor and disadvantaged people in Africa. From the lessons learnt with the six case studies, a set of recommendation for further actions could be inferred, as it follows:

- 1) Countries of the same REC should consider working collaboratively in identifying establishing and implementing appropriate mechanisms for reaching out to the disadvantaged learner. To this effect, the Inter-Country Quality Node approach supported by ADEA and its partners including the Bureau of African Ministries of Education Bureau could be envisaged; the EDL issue could also be highlighted in the already existing Literacy and Language node.
- 2) Innovative ways of strengthening the existing programs for the educationally disadvantaged groups shall be devised.
- 3) New multi-pronged programs should also be developed in line with the identified needs of the disadvantaged given the diverse characteristics of the disadvantaged learners. Otherwise, the overdependence on formal approach would continue to exacerbate the problem of the disadvantaged;
- 4) Out-of-school strategies shall, in particular, be identified and implemented with the purpose of reaching out learners whose livelihoods require strong individual and social specialization that could not be easily accommodated within ordinary schools. Thus, education must be taken to the doorstep of those who cannot make it to school;
- 5) Governments shall put in place legal instruments and policies aimed at achieving the goals and objectives of those international programs that they have indicated commitment to implement;
- 6) In this regard, ministries of education shall, in collaboration with the beneficiaries and non-government organizations, establish institutional framework to coordinate programs concerning the literacy / non-formal subsector, and effectively implement the national policies for the disadvantaged learner. In the same wave, a social integration framework that promote inclusive education must be established;
- 7) Governments as well as IDPs must demonstrate, in unambiguous ways, their willingness to successful implementation of EDL programs by making realistic financial allocations for EDL in their plans, ensuring that non-formal education is not treated just as a ‘footnote’ to the formal subsector and making sure that adequate funding is earmarked for the EDL, where ever necessary;
- 8) Countries wishing to embark on the education for the disadvantaged groups should partner with IDPs and civil society organizations in view of their global wealth, experience and expertise in matters of education of the disadvantaged;
- 9) Gender mainstreaming should build on knowledge and lessons learnt from previous experiences with gender equality policies. The process of gender mainstreaming should involve raising awareness, legitimization implementation and institutionalization as well as monitoring and evaluation;
- 10) Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) shall be resorted to as an

instrument to address the need of the disadvantaged and fight against poverty. Therefore, a deliberate policy must be put in place to increase enrolment in technical and vocational education and training courses. In particular, Governments, in collaboration with key partners should enact policies conducive to improving access to TVET for all, with specific focus on increasing female participation; The experiment conducted in Mauritius consisting of introducing Pre-Vocational Education (PVE) at secondary school level to provide training for over aged failing students shall be assessed for possible scaling up in other African countries;

- 11) Countries must aggressively pursue policy of eradicating illiteracy and should show commitment in pursuing adult literacy programs for more effectiveness in promoting inclusive education;
- 12) Special teacher training programs and incentives for teachers for the EDLs must be put in place to enhance their retention and ensure quality provision;
- 13) Governments and NGOs must provide adequate infrastructural facilities, reading materials and relevant curriculum frameworks so as to bring classroom closer to the learner in the spirit of inclusive education;
- 14) Training institutions, Governments and their partners shall train, deploy, and support teachers as well as technical staff in special need education;
- 15) Government shall establish special mechanisms for planning, coordination, monitoring and evaluation programs for the disadvantaged. Periodic reviews must be set in motion to make sure that during implementation these programs are not diverted from their original intents;
- 16) Cooperation with other sectors dealing with the EDLs, in particular Health, Gender Affairs, and Public Employment shall be strengthened;
- 17) Within the Education Sector, better cooperation and synergies should be sought between specialized tertiary education institutions, Ministries of education and other partners to care for the disadvantaged;
- 18) Education statistics must be reported in a way to highlight the issue of the disadvantaged learners, be they in or out of the system

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