

Country profile prepared for the
Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007
Strong Foundations: Early Childhood Care and Education

Nigeria

Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programmes

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NIGERIA

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECCE) programs

A. GENERAL INFORMATION, STATISTICS AND INDICATORS

Starting age of compulsory education (if applicable):

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) the compulsory education age range is 6-11 years.

1. ISCED 0 PROGRAMS (USUALLY, PRE-PRIMARY EDUCATION)

(ISCED = International Standard Classification of Education)

1.1. National definition of ISCED 0 programs:

Pre-primary education (Nursery school)

1.2. Normative age group(s) covered by ISCED 0 programs:

In principle, 3-5 years of age

1.3. ISCED 0 programs: statistics and indicators (*source: UIS*)

1.3.1. Enrolment:

	Percentage	Year
Gross enrolment ratio	14.7	2003/04
Net enrolment ratio	10.9	2003/04
Percentage of children entering primary education with previous preschool experience	<i>Not available</i>	

1.3.2. Enrolment ratio by age group, 2002/03 (percentage, also including the first years of primary education when applicable):

Less than 3 years of age	Age 3	Age 4	Age 5	Age 6	Age 7
1.0	7.9	13.0 4.3(*)	9.7 41.0(*)	2.3 48.0(**)	0.0 60,8(**)

UIS estimation. (*) Enrolled in primary education. (**) Primary education enrolment ratio.

1.3.3. Teachers: Not available

Total number of teachers	Of whom female (%)	Percentage of trained teachers (all)	Percentage of trained teachers (males)	Percentage of trained teachers (females)

1.3.4. Funding: Not available

	Percentage
Public current expenditure per pupil as percentage of the Gross National Product per capita	...

1.3.5. Main source(s) of financing:

- a) UBE Intervention Fund from the Federal Government of Nigeria's Consolidated Revenue Fund:
- b) Complementary funding from state and local governments
- c) Funds or consolidated contributions in form of Federal guaranteed credits
- d) Local individual/corporate, as well as international donor grants.
- e) Contributions for privately owned ECD centres, Nurseries and Pre-Primary Schools, by communities, NGOs and private individuals

5% of the Federal Government of Nigeria's Universal Basic Education (UBE) matching grant to States (i.e. 36 States of the Federation and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) to be allocated to Pre-Primary education for children age to 3-5 years per quarter.

2. OTHER ECCE PROGRAMS (*Generally preceding ISCED 0 programs*)

2.1. National definition of other ECCE programs:

Early Child Care (ECC)

Early Child Development (ECD) centres, and Day Care Centres and Play Groups locally tagged 'Jelesimi', 'Ota-akara', 'Ibviosukumehu' etc. in local dialects; both usually for children aged 0-2 years and 2-3 years.

2.2. Normative age group(s) covered by other ECCE programs:

0-2 years; 2-3 years

2.3. Estimate number of children covered by other ECCE programs:

Not available

B. BACKGROUND INFORMATION CONCERNING ECCE PROGRAMS (INCLUDING ISCED 0)

3.1. Legislation concerning ECCE:

The UBE Act (2004) has an expanded scope which includes programmes and initiatives for early childhood education and development. The UBE Programme has made provision for every public primary school to have a Pre-Primary school linkage to cater for children aged 3-5 years. The act is silent on early childhood education and development in the age group 0-3 years.

3.2. Official body/bodies in charge of supervision or coordination:

Federal and State Inspectorate Services, in collaboration with UBEC and SUBEBS (these two bodies, UBEC and SUBEBS, have statutory mandate for basic, i.e. primary and pre-primary, education).

3.3. Other entities involved in the provision (e.g. municipalities, local governments) and main types of providers (e.g. public, private, mixed, community-based, etc.):

- a) Private (Private Individuals, NGOs, the Civil Society including Religious Organizations)
- b) Public (Federal Government, State and Local Governments)

c) Local Communities

In general, pre-primary facilities can be categorized as Early Child Development (ECD) centres and day care centers for children aged 0–3 years and pre-primary (nursery) schools for children 3–5 years. The privately-owned centres are run on a commercial, fee-paying basis. The fees charged usually depend on the quality of the teachers and facilities provided. However, the UBE Act (2004) integrated pre-school education into UBE Programme as an essential component, resulting in increased government ownership and participation in pre-school early child development. Every public primary school is now expected to also include a pre-primary/ECC centre which, like the primary school component, should be non-fee paying and serviced free.

An inventory of ECC facilities in Nigeria conducted by FGN/NERDC/UNICEF in 2003 showed that most of the ECC facilities are privately owned (42% of the sample population) and 34% by the government, followed by 21% by local communities. These findings are consistent with the ESA 2003 study, which also indicated a greater private ownership (57%) of ECC facilities, compared to ownership by the government (42%). Now that the Early Childhood Development programme is covered by the UBE law, government ownership at state/LGA/community levels is certain to increase, particularly regarding centres catering for the 3-5 year olds. However the challenge remains as to the role of UBEC and SUBEBS on issues relating to the 0-3 year olds and who, beyond caregivers and communities, should assist on those issues

3.4. Type of personnel involved:

Teachers; Caregivers; Nannies; Nursery Helpers; Administrative Officer; Accountant; Clerks; Typists; Cleaners; Gardeners.

3.5. Type of staff training (requirements):

Early childhood care has been included in the Bachelor's degree curriculum of the Faculty of Education of one of the Nigeria's universities since 1991. Two universities offer Master's/PhD degrees in early childhood care. Plans are underway to integrate the concepts of this project in the syllabus of colleges of education throughout the country.

In-service training on the IECD concept and learner centered pedagogy for handling young children is continually provided to teachers/caregivers in public ECC/pre-school facilities in UNICEF supported 111 focus LGAs nationwide. However, only now is it being realized that early childhood care should not have excluded care of children in the 0-3 year age cohort, a critical period for optimal care and early stimulation upon which attainment of the child's fullest development potential depends. Skill to deliver such care and stimulation require to be imbibed by caregivers in widely differing socio-cultural environments, well beyond classroom settings and perceived curricula

3.6. Recent national policies and reforms:

The Child Rights Act (2003), the UBE Act (2004), the National Policies on Education, Food, Nutrition and Health are laws and policies which have given shape to different sectoral interventions on Early Childhood Care and Development in Nigeria. Currently however, an Integrated Early Childhood Development (IECD) policy, that integrates interventions from the various sectors to promote an integrated holistic approach to the development of the child in its very earliest years. This stand alone policy is expected to bridge observed gaps in existing sectoral policies, e.g. the National Policy on Education and the UBE Act both of which did not make specific provisions for children age 0-3years. The policy is at draft stage, ready for consideration by a larger forum of IECD Stakeholders expected to meet early in 2006.

The expanded scope of the UBE Programme to include a pre-primary linkage in every public primary school at state/LGA levels is a welcome development expected to boost enrolment, especially of girls in states with low girls' enrolment.

3.7. Efforts targeted at vulnerable or disadvantaged children:

- a) Community driven and home based care and support for young children age 0-3 years supported by UNICEF in 222 focus communities nationwide has boosted access of very vulnerable and disadvantaged children to early child care and early learning.
- b) Launch of the Children and AIDS campaign in Nigeria with increased focus, care and attention to children affected and infected by the HIV and AIDS' scourge. Increased advocacy has been mounted with government and other stakeholders to ensure that young children are fully protected from the scourge of the disease through observance of the four Ps: Prevention, PMTCT Plus, Pediatric treatment, Protection, Care and Support. Partnerships are being developed and widened to ensure adequate attention is given in terms of appropriate interventions, resource leveraging and mobilization

3.8. Special projects/programmes aiming at expanding or improving ECCE:

Empowerment of Communities and Parents in good care practices and stimulation using an IMCI Communication Package and training guide developed by WHO, UNICEF and the government and disseminated through trained Community Resource Persons (CORPs). The training package, which integrates key household practices and early stimulation, is aimed at forging good parenting skills, and ensuring adequate protection, care and support for young children, to enable them attain their fullest potential.

3.9. Information concerning the curriculum (if applicable) or the contents of ECCE programs

Efforts to develop appropriate curriculum for Early Child Care and Education in Nigeria started about a decade ago. The first edition, developed in the late 1990s, emphasized the holistic development of the child, catered for the physical development and stimulation of the child, but was directed essentially at a classroom audience, and still left care of children in the 0-3 year bracket up to the traditions and

cultures into which these children happened to be born. The increasing global advocacy for an integrated approach to Early Childhood Development is beginning to change that situation, as is the need to address emerging concerns such as the HIV/AIDS Education, Peace and Conflict Resolution and Safety/Security.

Thus the curriculum was reviewed and revised in 2003/4 using an integrated bottom up approach, targeting children age 0-5 years. This revised curriculum has been approved for use by the government, and a training manual to facilitate use of the curriculum is in process of development. The training manual is expected to promote the integrated approach and converge all sectoral interventions – health, nutrition, water and environmental sanitation, psycho-social care, early learning, child protection with the aim to fulfilling the rights of all young children and creating a conducive environment for them to survive, live, learn and reach their full potentials.

3.9.1. Objectives and aims:

The purpose of Early Childhood/Pre-primary education as expounded in the National Policy on Education (4th Edition 2004):

- Effect a smooth transition from the home to the school;
- Prepare the child for the primary level of education;
- Provide adequate care and supervision for the children while their parents are at work (on the farms, in the markets, offices, etc.);
- Inculcate social norms;
- Inculcate in the child the spirit of enquiry and creativity; through the exploration of nature, and environment, art, music and playing with toys, etc.;
- Develop a sense of cooperation and team spirit
- Learn good habits, especially good health habits; and
- Teach the rudiments of numbers, letters, colors, shapes, forms etc. through play.

3.9.2. Learning areas and teaching-learning methods:

The IECD programme is premised on basic service delivery. This implies the involvement of several service delivery sectors such as health, water and environmental sanitation and nutrition agencies. At the care centres catering for children in the 0-3 years age group, caregivers are expected to receive as much training as possible from these agencies. The EYDCC needs to develop the capacity within itself to provide technical support for training CORPs in communities and LGAs. Also, the EYDCC/UNICEF partnership will be required to develop and provide supportive IEC materials to promote an integrated approach to early childhood development in these communities and LGAs, to benefit the children, parents and caregivers in the centres. This partnership will also provide a checklist of minimum standards at the care centres to caregivers who will familiarize themselves with the curriculum, identify the materials listed, prepare a realistic scheme of work and seek assistance where necessary.

At the pre-primary level, for the 3-5-year-olds, the curriculum is broad, and the range of subjects offered is quite wide. At the pre-primary level, six thirty-minute periods per week are devoted to the teaching of English. This is the maximum number of weekly periods for any subjects. Two periods are allocated to the local language.

Another subject that is given prominence in the pre-primary school programme is mathematics/arithmetic. Five periods are allocated to this subject per week and, on the average, the children spend one thirty-minute period every day learning mathematics. Topics like counting, recognition of numbers, addition and subtraction are also taught. This gives an important start in the acquisition of numeracy. Three periods are allocated to each of the following subjects: moral and religious instruction, writing, reading, drawing, rhymes, elementary science/nature study, social studies, handicraft and music /singing. The medium of instruction at this level is principally the mother tongue, or the language of the immediate community. The evaluation system is essentially based on continuous assessment, conceived as a cumulative record of the child's performance in various fields throughout his or her school career obtained through tests, quizzes, etc.

3.9.3. Average number of hours per week and average amount of weeks per year:

At the pre-primary level, instructional time consists of twenty-eight teaching periods per week on the average.

3.10. Any other relevant and pertinent information

Although pre-primary education began as a private sector enterprise in Nigeria, government's participation and ownership particularly at state and local government levels is expanding, courtesy of the UBE Act (2004) which makes pre-primary school an integral part of the UBE Programme. States that are implementing the UBE Programme are expected to integrate pre-primary schools in their public schools. Such schools are non-fee paying and are supported with materials and facilities, thereby making pre-schools affordable and open to more children. Recent school census data disseminated by FGN/UBEC (2003) showed increase in participation in early years' programme with more than 1.4 million young children enrolled nationwide in 2003.

Similarly, UNCEF's intervention and support in 111 focus LGAs has increased access to early childhood care and development especially to remote communities, which now have at least an IECD facility, home/centre based to cater for their young children. However, a large proportion of Nigeria's children still lack access to or participate in early years development programmes in the country.

A Minimum Standard Package has been developed and approved to ensure quality of service delivery both at the home-, community-, or school-based centres. However, it is still unclear how this package is being used (some attempt is being made at capacity building of the various operators, teachers and caregivers on the use an application of the revised IECD curriculum and the Minimum Standard Package). Also, IECD is being integrated into the new Inspection Schedule to integrate it properly into the UBE Programme to guarantee regular and proper monitoring of the project. To ensure a systemic integration of IECD into teacher training curriculum and assure production of quality manpower to implement the curriculum, agreement has been reached with the National Commission of Colleges of Education on mainstreaming IECD as a course in teacher training. Again, quite how this will translate on the ground at homes, communities and schools is unclear, and some technical support is likely to be required.

C. SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION REGARDING ECCE (TO BE COMPILED IN COLLABORATION WITH UNICEF OFFICES WHERE POSSIBLE)

4.1. Parenting programmes are usually addressed to parents and families of children less than 6 years of age. Please provide information about any parenting programmes in your country according to the table below:

Type of programme	Yes or No (note for each programme)	Please estimate the number of beneficiaries (if possible)
Parenting education through early learning centres and child care centres	Yes	Not known
As component of health and nutrition programmes, such as information about child development included in health and nutrition visits	Yes (to improve Key Household Practices)	
Parent groups that meet to discuss issues of their young children, including health, nutritional status, and development	Yes (in Mother’s Clubs, and Community Nutrition InformationSystem for Action , COLNISA)	
As component of adolescent, livelihood or literacy programmes	Yes (in addressing Reproductive Health, Child Care and Family Life issues mainstreamed into curricula for NFE Girl Child Education, Out of School Boys’ Education)	
Media broadcast, such as <i>Sesame Street</i> , with media for and with children	Not Applicable	
Other (please specify)		

Are any of these programmes targeted specifically toward the vulnerable, poor, disadvantaged or excluded? If so, which ones? (Please provide/attach any additional and relevant information if available).

Not available

4.2. Is there a national-level system for monitoring children's development or school readiness prior to entering primary school?

No

4.3. Is there a policy on early childhood (ECCE, ECD, etc.) that has been accepted? If not, is there one under development?

Yes, as has been described exhaustively in sections above

[Information revised and additional data provided by UNICEF, December 2005.]