

Evaluation of Educational Reforms and Human Capital Development in a Global Age

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Abstract

Our concern is lecture is basically an evaluation of the National 10 – year Development Plan on Educational Reforms and The part of NEEDS policy on the making of Millennium Development Goals. MDGs in 2005. The Policy provisions were critically evaluated as to what extent they have gone midway into the Targeted year 2015. It was found that by year 2010, the implementers of these 10 – years – Development plan have not gone near 45% of what should be 100% by 2015. The UBE and MDGs goals may end up as mere pipe dreams and a drain on the national resources if double Efforts are not made now to strengthen the resolve to achieve these set goals. It was recommended that all the policy options in all the section of our educational system must be vigorously pursued in order to attain these goals we have set for our nation Nigeria

Introduction

The evaluation of Educational Reforms and Human Capital Development in Nigeria of our Vision in 2010 is to be based on the recent development plans which are linked to the 1999 Constitution. The current reform policy of the government revolves around the 10 – year Strategic plan by the Federal Ministry of Education as well as the NEEDS document (2004). The Reform is intended to overhaul the entire education sector and to promote quality education For life - skills acquisition, Job creation and poverty eradication. It will put in place a sound Frame work that will enable implementing to widen access, increase equity and enhance the quality of educational provision.

The National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (2004) is not just a plan, it Defines a process of development anchored on a clear vision, sound values and enduring Principles. The most recent articulation of the vision of NEEDS is embodied in the 2001 Kuru Declaration as follows:

To build a truly great African Democratic country, politically united, integrated and stable, Economically prosperous, socially organized, with equal opportunity for all and responsibility from all, to become the catalyst of (African) Renaissance and making adequate all-embracing contributions, sub-regionally and globally (p.27).

The Strategic Framework For Policy Guidelines And Reformation:

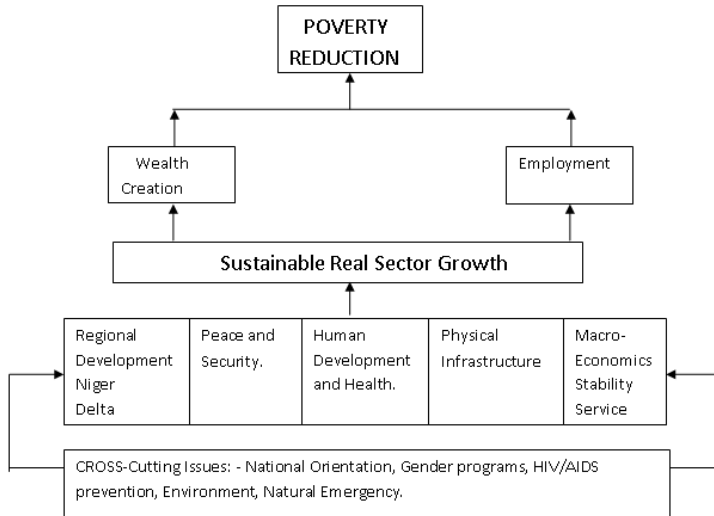


Figure1: The strategic framework for policy Guideline for Reforms and Human Capital Development.

Source: Seven Point Agenda: The Nigerian Project on Human capital Development.

Siteresources. World Bank.org.pointpolicy Nigeria.pdf.

Figure1: is highly instrumental to the guidelines the Nigeria Authorities are expected to follow in reaching some decisive goals on human capital development in our Educational system. As much as the government is fully abreast of the need to create Wealth and provide full employment in order to reduce poverty; the real sector growth Is underpinned by an array of other problems as shown in the schema. The Human Capital development and Health is seen central in the entire reformation process. The underground problems and issues are not to be neglected for they are equally very Important in the entire scheme. This strategic framework therefore gives the foundation On which the reformation in education and the human capital development was based. Therefore the final outcome of this evaluation process will take a full account of how The originating policy statements by the governments where achieved partly or wholly. The cross-cutting issues as shown in this schema are equally very important to the total Outcome of this exercise.

The Projected Government Policies For Reformation & Human Capital Development

The main policy that guided the Nigerian government at the Federal, State and Local Levels given other challengers are as follows: It was envisaged by these tiers of Governments that when these policies were successfully implemented that sustainable and desirable changes were very feasible. These include:

- Provision of adequate resources for the entire education sector and improving the
- efficiency and effectiveness of the use of available funds for the implementation of
- The MDGs and UBE program, especially at the state level. The current levels of public

- Spending is insufficient to fill the financing gap to achieve UBE and improve the quality and relevance of post-basic education in Nigeria. Further increase in support to the educational sector through additional resources mobilization from domestic (including the private sector), development partners and other interventional agencies is required.
- Physical Rehabilitation of all secondary and primary schools in the country using additional 0.1% besides the 2% contribution to the Educational Tax Fund (ETF) and partnering with private sector.
- Develop at least 10% computer and internet access in all primary schools, at least 30% in all secondary schools and at least 70% in all tertiary institutions.
- Encourage local internet companies to sponsor connectivity to schools.
- Provision of free textbooks in primary and secondary schools.
- Strengthening the capacity of the ministry of education and its relevant institutions at all levels of government for planning and management and the operationalizing of the federal government 10-year Education Sector Plan.
- Design and implementation of the state education reforms based on the ongoing Federal Education reforms.
- Removing barriers to girl's basic education especial; in the Northern regions and boys schools drop-out in the Southern region including community mobilization and advocacy, recruitment and development of woman teachers and improvement of physical facilities.
- Design and implement strategies to increase school enrolment, train, increase and retain the number of teacher at all levels of education. The currents efforts by the Federal Government to provide one meal per day for every pupil at the primary school level should be sustained.
- Preparation of a National Post Basic Education Strategy, focused on Science and Technology, quality innovation in line with the objective of NEEDS that will re-align education with needs of labour market.

These were the basic policy thrust to guide the implementation of the modern reforms in education and ensure that there is complete improvements in the development of human capital in Nigeria at all fronts. In addition to the educational sector reforms', there is other initiatives that have been introduced by the current government for the implementation of Government's 10-year Strategic Plan (2006 – 2015). These are what we shall term as structural and institutional reforms. (The Seven Point Agenda: - The Nigeria project (2006). These new areas focused on the following:-

Structural And Institutional Reforms

It is instructive to remark that in July 2006, the Federal Government lunched a major restructuring of the Federal Ministry of Education and a reform packaged for the entire ducation sector. One of the outcomes of the restructuring exercise is the drafting of a Federal 10 - year Sector Plan with a re-classification of Education system as follows:

Basic Education

This incorporates early childhood care and development and primary and junior Secondary Education anchored on the UBE program. The Federal Government through The UBE program aims to tackle gender disparities in enrolment, attendance and low completion rates. The current primary

net enrolment is about 61% and 7.8 million children are currently still out of school. An estimated 35% of the relevant age group attends junior secondary schools.

Senior Secondary Education

The objective is to develop a framework for implementing the public/private partnership model for management of unity schools. Other goals include reforming Sciences, technology, technical and vocational education to increase its relevance to the economy and labour market. It also aims to attract and retain teachers, encourage Private Sector participation and encourage student enrolment at senior secondary school levels.

Special Education

The aim of the Federal Government is to develop a formula for funding adult and non-formal special needs and nomadic education.

Tertiary Education

The vision is to advance Nigeria's economic growth and global competitiveness through the provision of accessible, affordable, relevant and high quality education in tertiary Institutions.

Universal Basic Education Programme

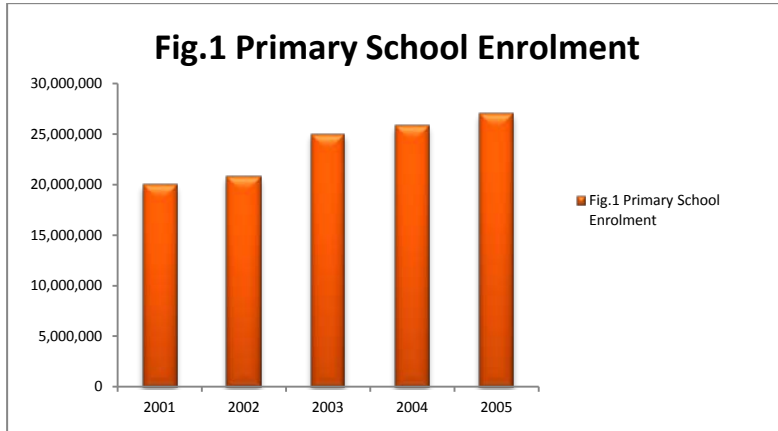
The current government introduced the UBE program in 1999, making it compulsory for every child to receive nine years of "free" education. The Child Right of 2003 also provides a Legislature framework to protect children and secure their basic rights, including the right to Education. The introduction of the UBE program is in line with the Federal Governments effort to achieve education –related. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs.) Concerned with the achievement of education related MDGs, the Federal Government established the assessment and monitoring committee on the MDGs Chaired by the President to fast-track decision making and guide and monitor the implementation of MDGs related Policies and Programs in all sectors of the economy.

Post-Basic Education Initiatives

At the post basic education level, Nigeria has adopted a strategic vision for tertiary Education with emphasis on science and technology. Current Education policies call for increased enrolment in Science and Technology program. Improved research and technology infrastructure and strong quality assurance mechanism.

Performance Analysis of Past Educational Operation(2001-2005)

There have been remarkable improvements in education sector with adult literacy rate rising from 57% in 2001 to 62% in 2005 primary school enrolment rose from nineteen Million in 2001 to over 26 million in 2005 as shown in figure 1.



Source: *The Nigeria Project Agenda* (pg. 63)

In the primary school category, the percentage of females in educational institution rose to 53% in 2005 from 51% in 2001. However there was a decline in the percentage of female in both the secondary and tertiary institution from 44% in 2005. The tertiary institution also witnessed a decline in the number of females from 45% in 2001 to 43% in 2005 with the implementation of the UBE program, the number of primary school rose from slightly over Forty-nine thousand in 2001 to over fifty-nine thousand schools in 2005. (See figure 2)

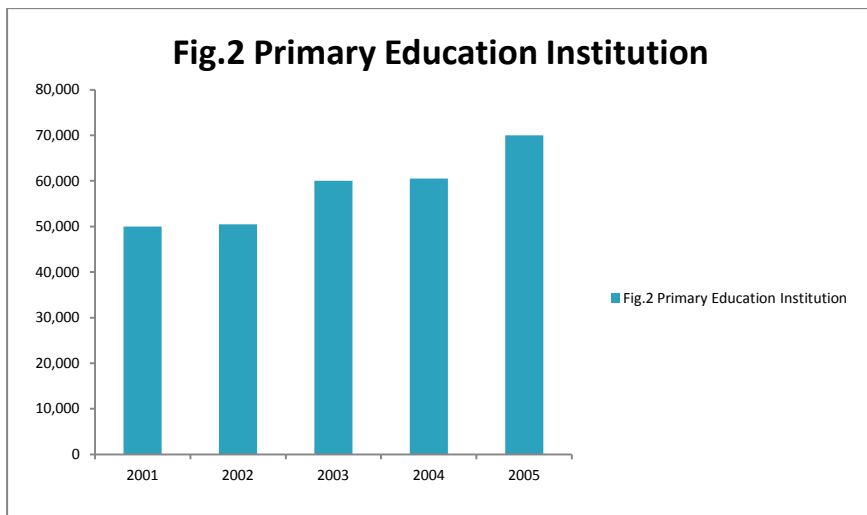
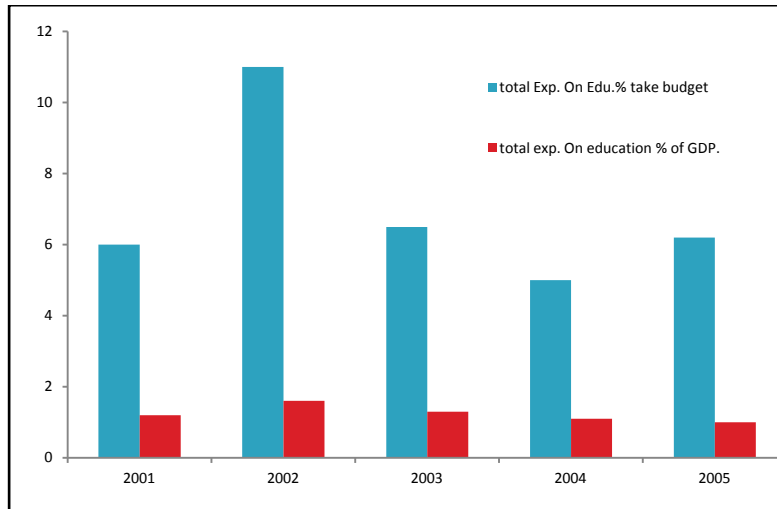


Fig.2 Number of Primary Educational Institution:

The Federal Government total Expenditure on education from 2001 to 2005 averaged 6% of the overall budget with the exception of 2002 which had a percent of almost 11% see figure 3 this is well below the UNESCO bench mark that recommends budgetary expenditure on Education of at least 20% of the overall total budget.



Other Major Challenges Facing Human Capital Development:

The Equity and Access to education:

Despite significant efforts since the launch of the UBE program, Nigeria is falling behind in its progress towards achieving the education related MDGs and Education for all (EFA) Goals. Nation – wide, 64% of school – age boys and 53% of school – age girls attend Primary school. There are large gender income and regional disparities in enrolment Rates. Enrolment rate of girls in some Northern States are only around 20%. The cost of Schooling both direct and indirect opportunity costs remains the key reason for low enrolment and for dropping out of school.

Quality and Relevance of Education

The quality of education in Nigeria is very weak for obvious reasons. These Weaknesses also vary from one state to another and within the states. There is Inadequate systematic and reliable information on students learning outcomes the (World Bank Policy –DFID-USAID on Nigeria Education policy notes) remarks that the Learning outcomes in primary schools are weak. And vary considerably across the different states.

It remarked that the main contributory factors to low learning outcomes are:

- (i) The poor condition of learning environment to support effective teaching and
- (ii) learning e.g. poor condition of physical facilities, shortage of textbooks and essential
- (iii) Instructional materials.
- (iv) Ineffective pre and in-service teachers training.
- (v) Outdated curricula

Inadequate funding

Inadequate funding is the bane of Nigerian Educational system. Whereas, the UNESCO prescription for countries to spend between 20 – 26% of their annual budget on Education. Nigeria can hardly go beyond 3 – 6%. The 2010 Budget also reflects this dismally low level of funding education in Nigeria. The figures shown earlier on the three tables reflects that the funding of education in Nigeria is grossly inadequate to meet the MDGs requirement on Education. Not to tack of Human capital development needs at whatever level in Nigeria.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is evidently clear and glaring that the work of monitoring and evaluation of the educational administration is further hampered due to shortage of needed quality data for information dissemination and make appropriate decisions in government cycles.

Conclusion

It is here concluded that the much talked about reformation in education in other to achieve the desired human capital development is yet to be fully pursued with vigor. The school enrolment of students and pupils at the secondary and pre – basic educational offering are yet to go near the MDGs targets. The claim that meeting MDGs goals are attainable in 2015 is a mere pipe dream. Too many challenges are now acting as barriers to make the achievement of the MDGs goals a reality. We can simply highlight problems of poor funding, shortage of educational facilities, government indebtedness to foreign lenders and internal debt over – hang which they service even now in 2010.

We would like to conclude that due to constant reports of corruption and capital flight to other developed countries from Nigeria, achieving Human Capital Development within the remaining period before 2015 is a mere wishful thinking.

Recommendations

1. The existing policy on the provision of adequate resources for the entire education Section as well as the utilization of the available funds for true implementation of the MDGs and UBE program should now be done with more vigor than before.
2. The physical rehabilitation of all primary and secondary school facilities should be Stepped up more than before.
3. The (ETF) Educational Tax Fund should learn to give more funds that their use is institutionally supervised, so that the money is not unduly diverted to other uses by individuals.
4. The ICT education at all levels must now be pursued with more vigor. The use of computers should be made compulsory at all levels of our school system.
5. The provision of the appropriate textbooks in all schools must be made mandatory.
6. The condition of the school library must seriously be tackled now more than ever before.
7. The general management of Education must be left in the hands of the professional educators not the ordinary civil servants who know little to nothing about what to do with our educational system.
8. The girl – child education in the entire school system must be seriously handled.

9. The Drop – out syndrome must be made a thing of the past.
10. The provision of qualified and efficient teachers is a sine-qua-non if our educational system is to grow above what it is now.
11. The development of post – basic education that emphasizes science and technology must be vigorously pursued now more than the mere lip service educational offering we have had in the past.

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