

UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION INCEPTION REVIEW REPORT May 2004

Background

Whilst Nigeria achieved near universal primary education in some parts of Nigeria in the 1970s, a decade of serious under funding and mismanagement in the 1990s has resulted in low and declining levels of primary enrolment, particularly for girls, low transition to junior secondary education and a serious decline in levels of literacy and innumeracy amongst school leavers. In 1999 the newly elected civilian government initiated a policy of Universal Basic Education (UBE) and states are preparing plans for the effective implementation of UBE.

The UBE programme is jointly funded by DFID and the World Bank with DFID providing funds of 12.5 Million for technical assistance (TA) to complement the loans provided by the bank to the federal and state governments (\$5 million per state) . This is the first phase of UBE and involves sixteen states of the federation and a component for the federal level.

The **goal** of the DFID project is Universal Basic Education in Nigeria. Its **purpose** is the development and implementation of sustainable state programmes for UBE in sixteen states with priority given to educationally disadvantaged LGAs. To achieve this purpose the DFID funded TA component will deliver five outputs. They are:

- Enhanced State and Local Government planning, management and monitoring of UBE on a sustainable basis.
- Strengthened school management through Local Government and community participation
- Innovative state based approaches for improving access, quality and equity
- State and UBE strategies incorporate HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention, planning for impact, and basic education provision for orphans
- Strengthened federal capacity and systems to finance and support UBE programmes

The DFID component is managed by a consortium led by the British Council called Capacity Building for UBE or CUBE.¹

Methodology

The inception review was carried out nine months after the start of the DFID component of UBE. The team consisted of two members of staff from DFID Nigeria and two from the World Bank office in Nigeria. It was felt that given the early stage of the projects development there was no need for an

¹ CUBE consortium members are the British Council, Cambridge Educational Consultants (CEC) and ActionAid Nigeria.

'independent' assessor. The team met with members of the CUBE consortium and key stakeholders. No visits were made to the state, although these have and will continue to be done out with the review process

Issues

The project was scored by the team according to DFID procedure (see annex) and it received a score of X- too early to judge extent of achievement. This was because the project had really only been operational for six months and had devoted its initial energies to recruitment and setting up. Two of the outputs received a scoring of 3 – likely to be partially achieved as some head way had been made in these areas, they were outputs 1 and 5. A higher score is anticipated in these areas once the project is established. These scores were in fact considered tentative as they are the only outputs that the project has really addressed to date. The project as a whole was therefore given an overall score of X.

The team identified a number of issues that need to be addressed by the project to ensure its effectiveness, these included;

1. The federal government has yet to disburse any counterpart funding for the project. This is affecting the federal component including funding for the National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), The Educational Data Bank (ED-DATA) and the National Steering Committee for the World Bank project (NETCOM), key institutions whose role is vital for the success of the programme. It also gives a negative impression of the level of priority given to the project by the federal government.
2. The low levels of capacity at state and local governments levels, this is exemplified by the difficulties experienced in recruiting state level advisors to oversee the programme. The erratic capacity of personnel in the government departments is compounded by a lack of resources both financial and material and a high level of turnover of staff at Local Government Authority (LGA) and state levels.
3. The confusion over the roles and responsibilities of the various government bodies and parastatals responsible for education at federal and state levels. This leads to competition over resources, little co-ordination of planning and budgeting and confusing reporting lines which compromise accountability mechanisms. For example the Ed data component of the project which will facilitate monitoring and impact assessment as well as planning is not linked into the federal and state monitoring mechanisms.
4. The lack of leadership for the project to date from the federal government. The NETCOM has yet to meet due to lack of counterpart funds, donor co-ordination should also be provided by this body.
5. The project needs to ensure that it feeds into and is informed by the National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) . This is Nigeria's Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) the leadership body

(NETCOM) should facilitate this. The project also has an important role to play in the State Economic Empowerment Development Strategies (SEEDS).

6. The Lack of enabling legislation, whilst the UBE bill has been passed by the National assembly it has yet to be signed into law by the President, NIEPA needs to be legally formalised and legislation is also needed at state level to facilitate the establishment of school management boards.

Lessons for UBE 2. Addressing the above issues will be crucial for the success of UBE 1 and will inform the development of UBE2. Girls' education has yet to be addressed adequately in UBE 1 and will need to be incorporated as a higher priority in UBE 2.

8. Management arrangements and reporting. Due to the delay in counterpart funding, particularly with NIEPA, TA funds have been used to fill the gap, particularly with housing for one of the long term consultants. This may have implications for the budget in the long term. DFID should be notified in advance of any such virement of TA funds . Due to delays in the programme the request by DFID for a report of outputs by state has not been possible

Recommendations

1. The lack of counterpart funding from the federal government is jeopardising some of the federal components of the project. If the money is not forthcoming the World Bank can redistribute the loan to the 16 states so the project can continue at state level. However this will impact negatively on the co-ordination and monitoring and evaluation function that the federal component should provide and will mean that the training and capacity building function performed By NIEPA will be compromised. . Efforts should be made by NETCOM, the donor partners and the key stakeholders to impress upon the federal government the importance of the timely release of the counterparts funds, if it is not forthcoming continued donor support for UBE 2 will be affected. CUBE should develop a plan/proposal for mitigating and addressing the impact of the lack of federal funds on the TA component for UBE 1.
2. The CUBE team have developed and learnt from the recruitment exercise they conducted for state advisers and will incorporate these lessons into future activities. The low levels of human and financial capacity at state and local government levels are endemic and underscore the importance of commitment in the long term to the project. The CUBE team should actively monitor the impact that the assumptions in the logframe may have on the project, especially the purpose level assumption relating to TA being effective in enhancing capacity.
3. The confusion over roles and responsibilities is endemic within Nigerian government, the effective establishment of NETCOM should help to address this by providing a co-ordination

mechanism for the project, facilitating ownership of the key stakeholders and strengthening donor co-ordination. It will also communicate the federal governments willingness to take the leadership of the project . The establishment of the NETCOM is outside the purview of the CUBE team who can however advocate for its establishment and implementation of its role. A plan for enhancing co-ordination of the federal level components e.g. the ed data component with other bodies - FOS and state PRS's should also be prioritised.

4. The CUBE team should identify and facilitate the projects input into NEEDS through NETCOM and other fora. A plan for engaging at state level with SEEDS should also be developed.
5. The CUBE team should consult with Access to Justice project and other relevant agencies to develop a plan for addressing the lack of enabling legislation at federal and state levels, the plan should also include what the team cannot do and how they will mitigate the impact of what is out with their control.
6. The activities under output three should specifically address the issue of girls education where appropriate and lessons both specific and more general should be fed into and inform the development of UBE 2. Regular monitoring and documentation of lessons learned will therefore continue to be an important aspect of the CUBE project.
7. Management arrangements and reporting. DFID Nigeria requires accurate annual projected spend on a monthly basis. There needs to be a monthly management meeting between CUBE and DFID to cover both technical and administrative issues as they arise. DFID Nigeria should meet with CUBE financial team to become familiar with their financial systems and procedures. DFID Nigeria should be given prior notification of any changes in existing allocations or virement of funds. DFID Nigeria requires a three monthly progress report which details activity against spend and outputs by state.

Recommended changes to the log frame

No change to the Goal or Purpose statements required.

Output 1 should now read - Enhanced State and Local government planning management and monitoring of UBE in conjunction with SEEDS where possible. An additional OVI for that output could be- increased annual spending on basic education.

Output three could have an addition MOV – Equity strategy document developed and being used in all training

Output 5 should now read – Strengthened federal capacity and systems to prioritise finance and support to UBE programmes within the context of NEEDS. A new OVI could be Increased allocations to the education sector and increased percentage of expenditure for primary education.

Conclusion

The inception review team would like to thank the CUBE team for all the hard work and efforts they put into preparing for and organising the review process. The consortium deserve to be congratulated for the progress they have made in the short space of time with the project in a difficult environment. Thanks also go to the key stakeholders who gave up their time to meet with us, we would not have been able to get to grips with the nature and issues of the project so quickly without their help and input.

Persons met

CUBE consortium British Council, Action Aid and Cambridge Education Consultants (CEC)

Technical Assistance Management Consultancy (TAMC) – Ron Fuller, Dennis Okoro, Tom Maiyashi, Mark Blundell, Catherine Chatham

List of people met in Govt. (during the meeting on 26 March):

Mrs E E Spiropoulos	NPCU (National Project Co-ordination Unit)
Dr Mrs Lami Amodu	NPCU
Mr S A Oladini	NPCU
Mr J O Ayansola	NPCU
Mr Bello Kagara	UBE 'Commission'
Mr Mike Aule	UBE
Mr Lanre Fagbohun	Education Data Bank, Federal Ministry of Education (FME)
Mrs E M Oyinloye	HIV/AIDS Unit, FME
Mrs Z U Momodu	HIV/AIDS Unit, FME
Dr Peter K Ojedele	National Institute for Educational planning and Administration (NIEPA)
Mrs Margaret Joshua	National Planning Commission (NPC)
Mr I P Darwet	NPC