

# ACCESS NIGERIA

## Phase 1 Research Brief

April 2022

### What is the ACCESS?

Accelerating Change for Children's and Youths' Education for Systems Strengthening (ACCESS) is a 4-year research partnership between the University of Auckland, the global Accelerated Education Working Group (AEWG), and Dubai Cares.

#### ACCESS Objectives

- Understand the wider political economy of Accelerated Education Programmes (AEP) and how it influences how they are embedded in education systems
- Establish a platform to bring together key stakeholders to work together to address challenges for better institutionalization of AEPs
- Identify factors which enable or constrain integration of AEPs into national education systems

### What did we do in ACCESS Phase 1?

From March 2021 to March 2022, ACCESS explored the gaps and opportunities for better institutionalisation of AEPs to meet the needs of over-age out-of-school children and youth (OOSCY) in five countries—Uganda, Nigeria, Jordan, Pakistan, and Colombia. ACCESS researchers spoke with key government officials, donors, implementing partners, UN agencies, civil society organisations, and others to understand:

- The need and demand for AEPs
- What programmes currently exist
- How/by whom they are funded, regulated, and implemented
- How much they are available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable to meet learners' needs
- Opportunities to better embed AEPs in national education systems
- Who needs to be involved in this process

#### What's next in ACCESS?

From April 2022 to July 2024, ACCESS will convene key stakeholders in Jordan, Nigeria, and Colombia to:

- Support collaboration
- Prioritise a key challenge
- Develop an action plan
- Take steps towards changes in policy and practice
- Reflect and revise the strategy

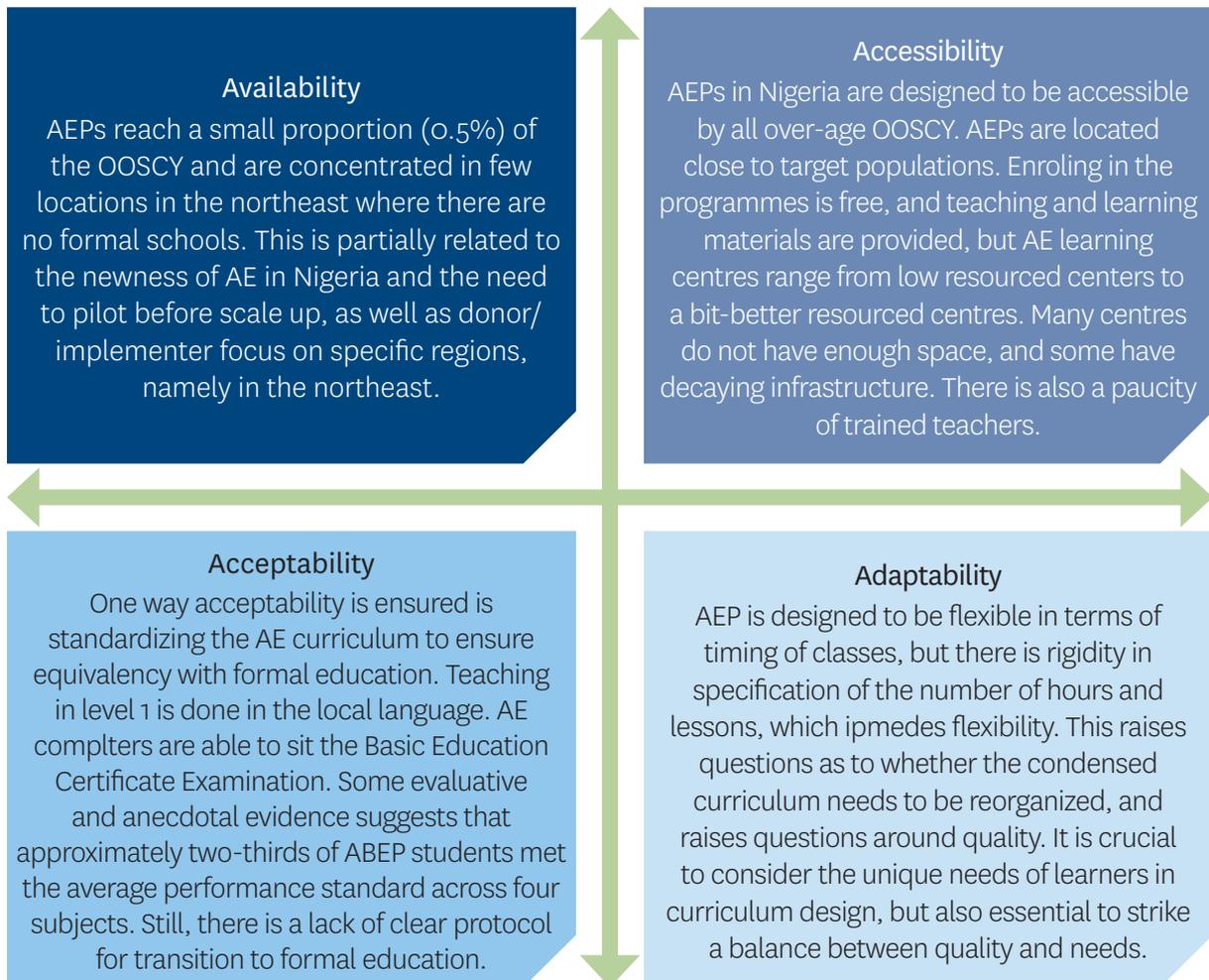


# Accelerated Education Programmes in Nigeria

Estimates on the numbers of out-of-school children in Nigeria varies by source, but show an upward trend from 2008 to 2018 for both primary- (7.3m to 10.2m) and lower secondary-aged children (2.8m to 9.9m). There has been a shift from more girls being out of school to more boys, and, while the vast majority of OOSCY are in the north east and the north west, there is a gradual increase in the south, as well.

While non-formal education has been promoted by the government as a response to high rates of illiteracy since 1990, AE only appeared in Nigeria in 2014. With the escalation of the insurgency in the northeast, many AEPs have been offered for OOSCY since, but there has not been a strategically designed and nationally programme or curriculum framework. Only in 2019 was the Accelerated Basic Education Programme (ABEP) approved and a new national AE implementation framework and curriculum developed. To date, most AEPs are implemented by INGOs and funded by international donors. Although the ABEP has been approved, the administrative and regulatory framework for implementation is yet to be fully put in place. Key government agencies like NMEC and UBEC are working together with NERDC to coordinate the development of the national implementation framework. Where AEPs are implemented, SAME and SUBEB regulate and monitor.

## How much are AEPs available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable?



## Political-economic factors influencing AEPs

Three main factors influence the extent to which AEPs are available, accessible, acceptable, and adaptable to meet the needs of over-age OOSCY in Nigeria.

### Legal frameworks and institutional structure

- Lack of focus on over-age OOSCY in current systems and structures means OOSCY tend to see NFE as directed towards illiterate adults.
- The administration of education is shared among education ministries at the federal and state levels, as well as statutory bodies referred to as parastatals. Three parastatals are empowered to provide basic education for different individuals--UBEC which is focused on basic education for school-age children, NMEC for adults who missed out on basic education, and NCNE for providing basic education for children of nomads and migrant fisherfolks.
- However, there is a gap in the laws establishing these parastatals, specifically in addressing the needs for over-age OOSCY, and there is no law that ensures provision of education for learners who have dropped out and returned some years later.

### Funding mechanisms

- One of the greatest challenges facing the education sector is poor funding, and NFE is even worse off than the formal education sector. The state agencies for mass education are grossly underfunded, if funded at all.
- Laws establishing agencies in NFE have not made clear provisions for funding NFE, and the Universal Basic Education Act excluded NFE.
- AEPs are currently funded by donor agencies, and primarily as a humanitarian response to the escalation of the Boko Haram insurgency and internal displacement and conflict in some parts of northern Nigeria. Thus, AEP provision is driven by donor agendas and do not meet the needs of all over-age OOSCY.

### The nature and quality of the formal education system

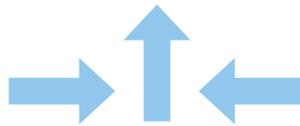
- One challenge facing graduates of AEPs may be the lack of existing pathways between AEPs and formal schools, but perhaps more importantly are challenges within formal education that expel AE graduates from the system when they get there.
- Many formal schools are already exceeding capacity with too few qualified teachers. Some schools also lack toilets, water, and other infrastructure.
- Safety concerns (abductions) and other crises also push children out of the formal schools.
- A lack of policy guidelines for mainstreaming learners into formal schools also means some schools refuse to accept AE graduates who are ready for mainstreaming.

# Key Opportunities for Engagement

## Opportunity 1: Establish a strong policy/legislative framework

### Enablers

National implementation guidelines under development which can be leveraged



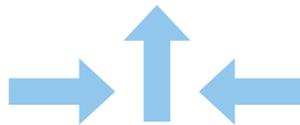
### Constraints

Policymaking and approval takes a minimum of one year and consultation to ensure approval

## Opportunity 2: Advocate for sustainable funding

### Enablers

Political will for education for OOSCY; approved AE curriculum provides grounds for funding



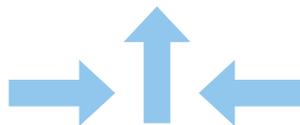
### Constraints

Conflict/confusion over if SAMEs or SUBEBs have responsibility for coordination and management

## Opportunity 3: Strengthen and align ABEP curriculum framework to meet learners' needs

### Enablers

Existing approved curriculum; political will in NERDC to initiate the process of change



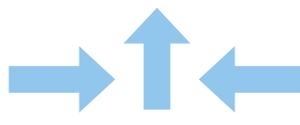
### Constraints

Funding for curriculum strengthening and alignment may not be available until late 2023

## Opportunity 4: Engage in teacher training and development

### Enablers

Existing contextualised and piloted teacher-training pack



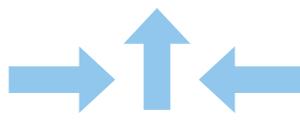
### Constraints

Lack of technical capacity to continuously train teachers

## Opportunity 5: Engage with CSOs and CBOs

### Enablers

Strong network of CSOs and CBOs in Nigerian education sector



### Constraints

Network lacks sufficient funds to engage in nationwide advocacy

For more information on ACCESS and to read the full report, visit <https://access-education.auckland.ac.nz/>.