



AYGF BLOOM Project (Pre-Launch) 2024



Introduction

Education is a fundamental human right and a crucial driver of personal, social, and economic development. Despite its importance, Nigeria faces significant challenges in the education sector, including access barriers, quality concerns, and disparities, resulting in over 20 million children lacking access to education, disproportionately affecting girls (UNICEF, 2024).

To address these challenges, the Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF) initiated the Bridging Learning Opportunities for Out-of-School Minors (BLOOM) project, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) – ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all. The BLOOM project offers a comprehensive solution, focusing on access, capacity building, and infrastructural support to create a conducive learning environment. By leveraging existing Almajiri schools, the project aims to empower out-of-school children to reach their full potential, contributing to a brighter future for Nigeria. BLOOM seeks to establish a sustainable model that empowers out-of-school minors aged 5-10 in targeted regions of Nigeria to realize their full potential.

Goal and Objectives

The overall goal is to contribute significantly to the reduction in the number of out-of-school children in Nigeria by 2030. Other objectives include;

1. Increase access to quality education for 2 million out-of-school children aged 5-10 in targeted regions within 5 years.
2. Enhance the capacity of 100,000 teachers in effective teaching methodologies, curriculum development, and child-centered learning approaches.
3. Reduce financial barriers to education by benefiting 700,000 households through conditional cash transfers.
4. Improve school attendance and cognitive ability through a school feeding program.
5. Expand the number of classrooms and learning resources by 10% in out-of-school populated and under-served areas within 5 years.

Methodology

The BLOOM Project adopts a comprehensive approach to address the educational needs of out-of-school children in Nigeria, with a specific focus on Almajiri and Public schools. This multifaceted approach aims to create a sustainable and impactful model for improving access to quality education.

1. Access to School: Reintegrating Out-of-School Children

- **Community Engagement:**

The BLOOM project will collaborate with local leaders, religious figures, and parents to understand and address barriers preventing school attendance. It will organize awareness campaigns highlighting the benefits of education, particularly for girls, and develop incentives such as school supplies and meals to encourage enrollment and continued attendance.

- **Flexible Learning Options:**

The project will explore alternative schedules or bridge programs to ease children back into formal education, utilize existing Almajiri schools for initial integration while transitioning children to government schools, and offer remedial classes to address any learning gaps for these children.

2. Teacher Training: Equipping Educators for Success

- **Capacity Building for Almajiri Teachers:**

The BLOOM project will design training programs focused on child-centered pedagogy, classroom management skills, and the national curriculum. It will partner with teacher training colleges in Abuja for professional development workshops and provide ongoing mentorship and support for Almajiri teachers integrating into the formal education system.

- **Teacher Training for New Recruits:**

The project will develop training programs aligned with national standards for newly recruited teachers, emphasizing inclusive teaching practices to cater to diverse learning needs. Additionally, it will facilitate workshops on technology integration in the classroom.

3. Infrastructural Support: Creating Conducive Learning Environments

- **School Rehabilitation and Upgrades:**

The project will assess the needs of adopted schools and prioritize renovations such as repairing classrooms, providing sanitation facilities, and ensuring safe learning environments. It will collaborate with government agencies and local communities to secure resources for infrastructure improvements and advocate for long-term infrastructure maintenance plans.

- **Providing Essential Learning Materials:**

The BLOOM project will organize school supply drives to ensure students have access to textbooks, notebooks, and learning aids. It will partner with publishers to negotiate discounts or donations of educational materials and explore options for locally-produced, low-cost teaching materials.

4. Technology for Remote Learning: Bridging the Gap in Insecure Areas

a. Technology-Enhanced Accelerated Learning:

- i. Implement accelerated learning programs that utilize technology to condense curriculum content while maintaining educational quality.
- ii. Develop interactive online modules and mobile applications aligned with the national curriculum.

b. Solar-Powered Learning Infrastructure:

- i. Utilize solar panels to provide electricity in remote areas, ensuring reliable power for technology use in schools.

c. Blended Learning Approach:

- i. Integrate smart boards in classrooms to enhance interactive learning experiences.
- ii. Train teachers on effectively utilizing technology in the classroom.
- iii. Combine online facilitators who deliver pre-recorded lessons or conduct live sessions with physical teachers present in the classroom.
- iv. Online facilitators can provide subject expertise or cater to larger student populations in secure areas.
- v. Physical teachers can offer personalized support, manage classroom activities, and address student needs directly.

The Pre-launch Programme

The AYGf BLOOM Project Pre-launch was held on the 4th of July, 2024 with over 150 participants at LEA Primary School in Karonmajigi Community to commemorate the start of the project. The event hosted diverse stakeholders including representatives from UNESCO, FCT-UBEB, CSACEFA, the Federal Ministry of Education and representative staff of AYGf. Also, in attendance were news anchors and agencies who had come to document and broadcast the event, news agency representatives from Arise News, Daily Trust, and NTA were present.

The Executive Director of AYGf, Dr. Arome Salifu gave a remark on the ambitious goals of the project and highlighted AYGf's commitment to addressing educational gaps in under-served communities. He stressed the importance of collective effort and partnerships for sustainable national development and expressed his appreciation and expectations for future collaboration. The **BLOOM** initiative represents AYGf's commitment to starting small but impactful efforts in under-served communities like Karonmajigi to create a world where every child has the opportunity to be educated. AYGf distributed learning materials which included 65 school bags, 130 books, and 2 packs of pens to students of LEA Primary School in attendance.

GOODWILL MESSAGES DURING THE PRE-LAUNCHED PROGRAMME

Mrs. Udoekpo Rose, Representing Director of Basic Education, Federal Ministry of Education

The Federal Ministry of Education commended AYGf for the BLOOM Project, highlighting it as a significant step towards addressing the issue of out-of-school children in Nigeria. They noted that the project aligns with their commitment to providing quality education to every Nigerian child, regardless of their circumstances. The Ministry acknowledged the severe impact of being out of school on a child's future and the broader societal consequences. They expressed appreciation for AYGf's dedication to ensuring access to quality education for all and expressed optimism about the project's potential benefits for minors. The Ministry also looked forward to continued collaboration to bridge the learning gap and create a brighter future for Nigerian children.

Mrs. Violet Onwuzulike, Representative, FCT UBEB

FCT UBEB commended AYGf for the BLOOM Project, describing it as a wonderful initiative that supports the less privileged in the community. The representative expressed heartfelt gratitude to AYGf for their collaboration with FCT UBEB and appreciated their commitment to addressing the needs of out-of-school children. They noted that the project not only supports the families of the beneficiaries but also fosters a brighter future for young minds.

The chairman and the entire team of FCT UBEB expressed their gratitude for AYGf's support and efforts to bring children back to school.

Mr. Adeyemi Oladeji, Representative, UNESCO

UNESCO expressed delight in supporting initiatives such as the BLOOM Project, noting that it aligns with their mission to promote quality education and support governments and member states. They commended AYGf for their efforts and commitment to ensuring access to education for all. UNESCO congratulated the beneficiaries and looked forward to continued collaboration with AYGf to create a brighter future for children. They also hoped that more organizations would join in supporting this noble cause and expressed sincere appreciation to AYGf for their dedication to education and child development.

Joy Anthony, Representative, (Civil Society Action Coalition on Education for All) CSACEFA

CSACEFA commended AYGf for implementing the BLOOM Project, describing it as a laudable initiative aimed at returning 2 million out-of-school children to education. They expressed belief that the project would address the challenges faced by children in the community, promote empowerment, and create opportunities for a brighter future. CSACEFA appreciated AYGf's commitment to education and child development and looked forward to continued collaboration to ensure the success of the project. They expressed pride in supporting AYGf in this endeavor and urged other organizations to join forces to make a lasting impact on the lives of these children.

Alh Yunusa Abdullahi Bako, District Head of Karonmajigi

Alh Yunusa Abdullahi Bako, District Head of Karonmajigi, commended AYGf and all those involved in the initiative, stating that they were not only investing in the future of the children but in Nigeria and the world at large. He emphasized that, together, they could make a difference and build a greater future for the children. He praised the efforts of AYGf and its partners in bringing positive change to the community and highlighted the impact of their work on shaping a brighter tomorrow.

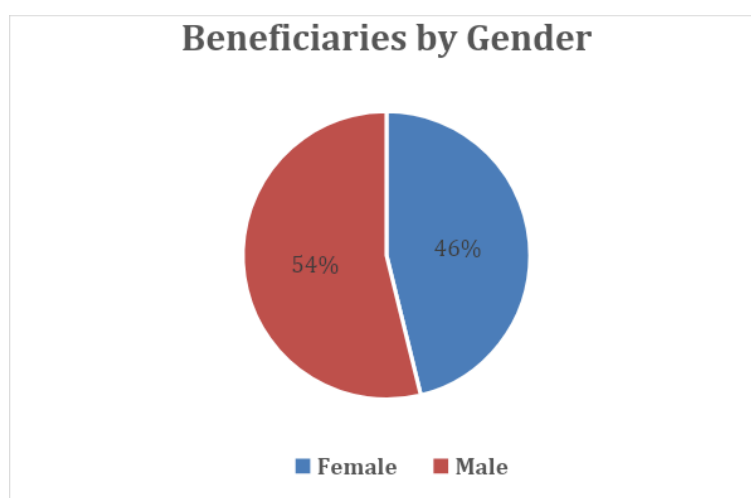
Outcome

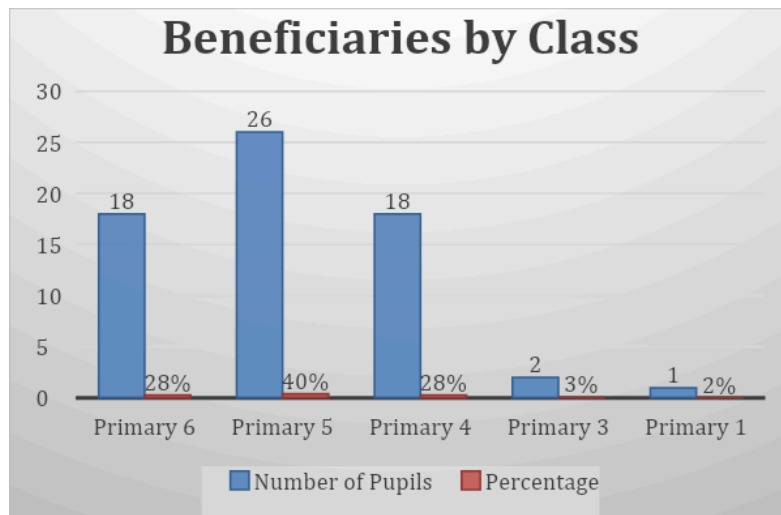
The BLOOM pre-launch event achieved remarkable success, providing financial support to 65 students at risk of dropping out, covering their school fees, and equipping them with essential learning materials like school bags, pens, and exercise books. Moreover, 30 out-of-school children were successfully reintegrated into the education system. The event also fostered strong community engagement, with stakeholders and members actively participating and expressing their commitment to the project's mission of promoting education and reducing dropout rates.

The anticipated outcomes by the close of the project in 2032 include increased school enrollment rates, enhanced teacher effectiveness, reduced financial barriers, improved attendance and cognitive abilities among children, and expanded educational infrastructure in targeted regions.

PRESENTATION TO THE BENEFICIARIES

AYGF presented gifts to 65 beneficiaries at risk of dropping out of school, including school bags, pens, and exercise books, and paid their PTA levy. The beneficiaries comprised 35 males (54%) and 30 females (46%), covering various classes: 18 (28%) in Primary 6, 26 (40%) in Primary 5, 18 (28%) in Primary 4, 2 (3%) in Primary 3, and 1 (2%) in Primary 1.





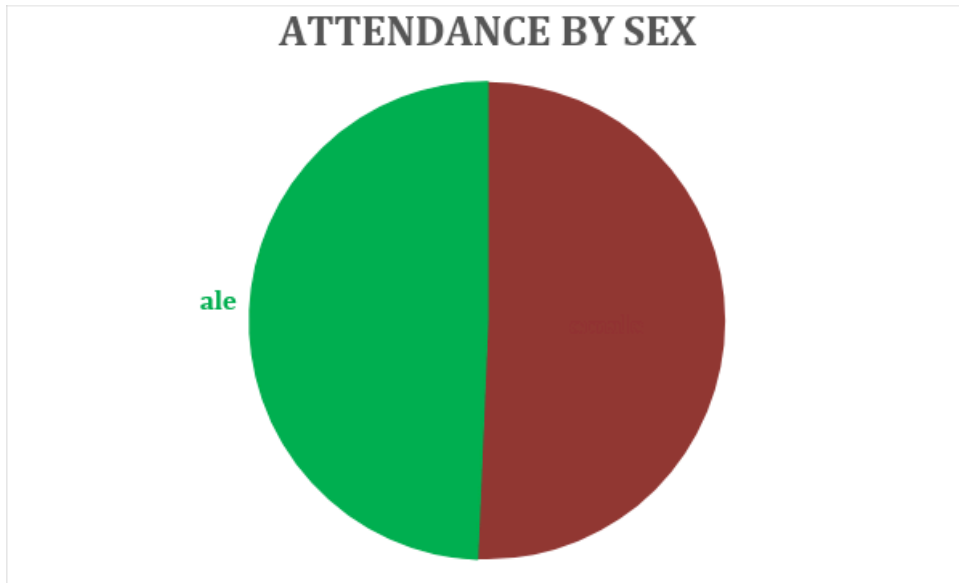
Conclusion

The BLOOM project represents a crucial step towards mitigating Nigeria's educational crisis. By addressing root causes such as poverty, insecurity, and cultural barriers to education, AYGf aims to create lasting impacts that benefit both individuals and communities. Through strategic interventions and partnerships, BLOOM seeks not only to bring children back to school but also to empower them with the skills and knowledge needed to break the cycle of poverty and contribute positively to Nigeria's future.

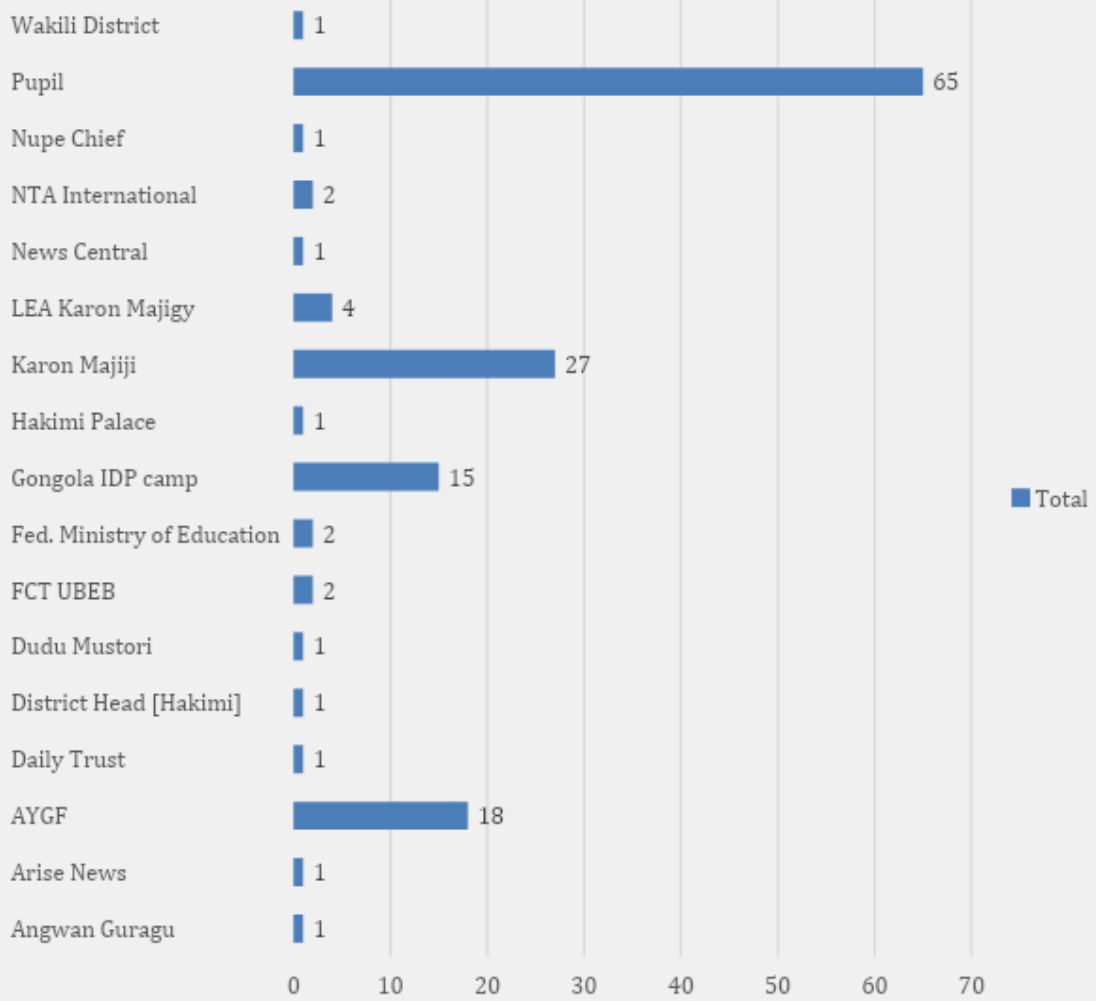
This expanded summary provides a comprehensive overview of the BLOOM project, highlighting its relevance, methodology, expected outcomes, and strategic approach toward achieving a sustainable impact in Nigeria's education sector.

Appendix

Attendance



ATTENDANCE



Pictures



The Executive Director, AYGF, presenting his opening remark



AYGF Communications Manager, Mrs Oloruntobi Adejare [Right] handing out learning materials to students.



AYGF Staff Distributing Learning Materials to Beneficiary Students



From the Left: Violet Onwuzulike [FCT UBEB], Joy Anthony [CSACEFA], Dr. Arome Salifu [AYGF], Rose Udoekpo [FME], Ach. Yunusa Abdullahi [Bako-District Head, Karonmajigi] and Adeyemi Oladeji [UNESCO]



Representatives from Fed. Min. of Education, FCT UBEB, UNESCO, CSACEFA, The District Head of Karonmajigi Community at the Emir's Palace [PWD Glory], Karonmajigi.



Staff of AYGf with community beneficiaries at Karonmajigi



Presentation by Students of LEA Primary School