



USAID-AENN Collaborates with Education Authorities to Standardize Guidelines for Transitioning Non-Formal Education (NFE) Program Completers to Formal Schools



Background

In the last decade, violent conflict has disrupted millions of lives in Northeast Nigeria. The region hosts one of the largest concentrations of internally displaced people (IDPs) in the world – an estimated 1,600,000 in Borno State and 132,000 in Yobe State. One in four IDPs in the region are under five years old, and 79 per cent are women and children.¹ These numbers underscore the importance of providing education to children whose lives and education and have been disrupted by conflict.

Accelerated Education Program (AEP) enables out-of-school children and youth to attend nonformal learning centers and eventually re-enter formal school. However, states in Northeast Nigeria lacked clear guidelines for mainstreaming nonformal learners into formal schools. Children who enrolled accelerated programs were not guaranteed a certified education. To address this issue, AENN led the development of a standard guideline on certified education opportunities, with options for mainstreaming into formal schools or continuing one's education through nonformal AEPs.



Process

Step 1: To develop a standard mainstreaming guideline, AENN began with a review of the National Nonformal Education Policy on Minimum Teaching Standards and Professional Qualifying Examination. The goal of the review was to identify standard Nonformal Education (NFE) pathways that could support certified nonformal education opportunities and valid pathways for mainstreaming into formal schools.

Step 2: After the policy review, AENN engaged key state, federal and implementing partners in a two-day Mainstreaming Guideline workshop. The goal of the workshop was to build upon the **Guidelines for Mainstreaming Learners from Non-Formal Learning Centers into Formal Schools**, originally developed by Creative Associates International under the USAID-funded Education Crisis Response (ECR) project. During the workshop, the Executive Secretaries of Borno and Yobe State Agencies for Mass Education (SAME), the Chief of Party of Northern Education Initiative Plus, former ECR staff, and other key stakeholders shared experiences and best practices for mainstreaming learners.

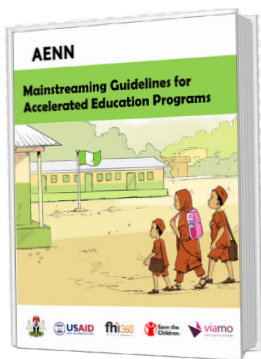
The Mainstreaming Guideline was enhanced by workshop participants' insights, including the following:

¹ https://www.humanitarianresponse.info/sites/www.humanitarianresponse.info/files/documents/files/ocha_nga_2020hno_30032020.pdf

- Placement of learners into classes based on performance.
- Avoiding placement of learners into formal schools without adequate space or teachers
- Abrogation of hidden charges which discourage parents from supporting education of their children
- Lack of funds for SAME to produce and issue basic literacy and post-basic literacy certificates to graduating learners

Step 3:

After the Mainstreaming Guideline was revised, AENN facilitated a validation meeting with officials from the Ministry of Education (MoE), States Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and SAME. They validated the Guideline and recommended its use for NFE service providers and government agencies in Borno and Yobe States. They also recommended seeking funds from the World Bank-assisted Better Education Service Delivery for All (BESDA) to support mainstreaming.



Step 4: To operationalize the Mainstreaming Guidelines in Borno and Yobe states, AENN trained government stakeholders, head teachers, and community coalition members on their roles and responsibilities in the mainstreaming process.

THE REVISED GUIDELINE

The revised Mainstreaming Guideline clearly delineates the process of transitioning nonformal learners into formal schools and more advance levels of nonformal education. In particular, the Mainstreaming Guideline recommends:

- minimum contact hours for certified education (250 contact hours over 9-12 for Basic Literacy; 850 contact hours for 18-24 months for Post Literacy)
- clear roles for education authorities, teachers, and parents to support the mainstreaming process
- clear mainstreaming pathways relative to age and experience



RESULTS

In January-February 2020, stakeholders used the Mainstreaming Guideline to successfully transition 21,508 learners from the AENN Basic Literacy program to the next stage of their education. During this time frame, 12,868 learners were mainstreamed into formal schools, and 8,640 were transitioned into Post Basic nonformal learning centers. At the time of COVID-19 school closures in March, an additional 7,996 learners were in the process of being transitioned.



NEXT STEPS

In January-February 2020, stakeholders used the Mainstreaming Guideline to successfully transition 21,508 learners from the AENN Basic Literacy program to the next stage of their education. During this time frame, 12,868 learners were mainstreamed into formal schools, and 8,640 were transitioned into Post Basic nonformal learning centers. At the time of COVID-19 school closures in March, an additional 7,996 learners were in the process of being transitioned.



The contents of the mainstreaming guidelines adequately captured all the steps required to support the Government of Borno State in reducing the number of out-of-school children in the state...Though the document was developed by AENN, the agency will recommend it to other non-governmental agencies implementing non-formal education program in the state

The Director of Continuing Education in the Borno State Agency for Mass Education (SAME), Adamu Usman

21,508 (73%)
of (29,504) AENN learners who completed the basic literacy program in PY1 were mainstreamed in PY2.



51%

11,048



49%

10,460