

# Oyo set to rehabilitate 227,842 out-of-school children

## • Assembly promises legislation

By KEHINDE ADIO

THE recent statistical report of Nigeria Data Survey (NDS) that Oyo State has not less than 227,842 out-of-school children, the highest number in the South-West, is still giving the state government sleepless nights.

The situation has given birth to series of meetings with concerned stakeholders in the state to identify the causes, where such children reside and how to bring them back into the school system for literacy, numeracy and vocational education.

Recently, the Department of Planning, Research and Statistics of the state Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, in collaboration with the United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Akure, facilitated a two-day interactive session on strategies to bring back the affected children to the classroom.

The event was held at the Princess Court and Resort, Oyo town.

While addressing the gathering consisted of permanent secretaries, directors from different departments in the various ministries, boards and agencies in the state, political appointees, media and members of the House of Assembly, the acting Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Mrs Ibironke Fatoki, expressed dissatisfaction with the development in the state and promised that the state government would ensure the return of the said children to school as well as

equip them with vocational education.

Mrs Fatoki noted that the issue of out-of-school children is a major problem and that it would require serious attention.

She said: "Oyo State government is committed to providing quality education to its citizenry and the initiative of the government at making education project participatory is unprecedented.



Group photograph of participants at the 2-day interactive session organised by the ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Oyo State

Philanthropists, corporate bodies and old students are contributing in the provision of infrastructure and school support services.

"However, despite these efforts made to put a sound education policy practice in place to get these children enrolled, retained, complete basic education and transit to tertiary, it's worrisome to note that (the rate of) out-of-school children in the state is

unduly high.

"It is, therefore, imperative to sensitise all the stakeholders and enlist their support on the need for concerted effort to inaugurate aggressive campaign for 'Leaving No Child Behind' and to make every child count."

Speaking in the same vein, UNICEF education specialist, Akure Field Office, Alhaji Muritala Mohammed, commended the state gov-

ernment and the ministry of education for mobilising stakeholders from the various states for the interactive session.

He said UNICEF would expect the newly constituted Steering and Technical Committees to develop a one-year action plan, conduct house survey on out-of-school children in the state and also develop strategies on how to take the children back to school.

He also added that there would be a need to develop a monitoring framework and a unit to communicate their results.

"Oyo State and other states the in South-West were noted for quality education and vocational development, and every home in the region patronised western education at all levels such that other regions in the country then were envious of them.

"Today, the situation has changed in every other state in the country. For instance, the northern states are stepping up in education development, developing various workable strategies and incentives to increase enrollment and to improve quality of education in the system.

"In this light, Oyo State must wake up and work out modalities to regain its old glory as education-focused state and pace setter among other states in the federation to deal with the increasing out of school children in the state."

The chairman, Committee on Education, Oyo State House of Assembly, Honorable Olukayode Akande, described the out-of-school children situation in Oyo State as a social malady that the house would give it its due attention to redress within a short time.

He promised that the assembly would develop legislation to eradicate the problem in the state. He then enjoined parents in the state to thenceforth take education of their children with keen interest.

Dr Adebisi Ayoola, from the Ministry of Health; Special Adviser to the State Governor on Education, Dr Bisi Akin-Alabi; Adekola Adeyemi and Mr Kareem Lukman in separate comments described the interactive session as a welcome development.

Chief (Mrs) Lucy Eniola and Dr Joseph Adesina, both resource persons, affirmed that the out-of-school children challenge is surmountable if appropriate human and financial resources are committed to fighting it.

## CIAPS stresses importance of outcome-based education

TUNBOSUN OGUNDARE-LAGOS

A Lagos-based graduate and research school, Centre for International Advanced and Professional Studies (CIAPS), has said it is only the outcome-based education that could help Nigeria solve its huge graduate unemployment and socio-economic problems.

The centre director, Professor Anthony Kila, stated this recently during the in-

auguration of new set of students for the centre at Adeniyi Jones, Ikeja, saying it is high time that Nigeria based its knowledge and skills acquisition for students on outcome-based education.

According to him, outcome-based education dwells more on practical knowledge than theories that many Nigerian schools are known for.

That is why CIAPS, he

said, combines only best of theories with the best of practices but with more emphasis on the latter at both the postgraduate and professional classes.

"Our aim is to be the factory of professionals that will lead their chosen industries as innovators and solution finders," he stressed.

Kila, a professor of strategy and development, said it is disheartening that many graduates from Nigerian schools have no requisite skills despite attaining such high level of education certificates that could enable them to contribute meaningfully to their chosen fields let alone societal advancement.

He said students need to be trained based on world economic reality and with

the mind of becoming solution providers upon graduation.

Welcoming new students, who are into various programmes such as international masters in Public Policy and Development, Hotel and Tourism Management, Media and Communications, professional certificate in School Management, Political Campaign Management, Production and Operation Management and so on, into the school, Kila said their training was to make them better managers in their chosen fields.

He also told outgoing students, some of who showcased their projects at the event, to remain committed to contributing their quota to making the world a better place.

## At varsity convocation, African govts charged to invest in youth

By TOSIN ADEPOJU AND EUNICE ELEKWACHI

AFRICAN governments have been admonished to establish a productive and enduring youth culture by investing in their career charting, which has been described as one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century graduates.

Making the call while delivering a lecture at the fourth annual convocation of the Esep le Berger University, Benin Republic, held at St Charbel Hall, Cotonou, the guest lecturer, Dr. Innocent Ezeugonwa, called on governments of African countries to pay more attention to supporting the youths in order for them to be more productive.

"If we want the best from our youths, we should invest in their career charting. Investing in their career is

prosperity for citizens and windfall for government," he said.

He urged the governments to provide an enabling environment for the youths to thrive, saying: "the governments should strive to achieve the nation's purpose. For instance, fixing the electricity problem of Nigeria today would have provided jobs for millions, because most of the businesses over-depend on reliable power supply."

Key dignitaries present at the convocation included the founder/proprietor of the institution, Germain Galonon; the university registrar, Charles Ijishakin; the academic director, Gbenga Akande; deans of faculties and heads of departments.

At the event, best graduating students received awards in several departments, with

Daniel Soneye; Eniola Yusuf Faridat; Oluchi Oyeme and Glory Umunakwe, among others, getting best graduating awards in Mass Communication, Politics and International Relations, Economics and Accounting.

## LAUTECH researchers underscore importance of nanotechnology

A group of researchers under the auspices of LAUTECH Nano Research Group has emphasized the importance of nanotechnology and science in Africa's bid for sustainable development, particularly in the field of energy, agriculture, health and water resources.

Rising from a three-day workshop attended by experts from diverse backgrounds, including the Science and Technology Minister, Dr. Ogbonaya Onu,

admonished governments of African countries to, without further delay, evolve policies and road maps on the utilization of nanotechnology with dedicated and adequate funding to promote research and development.

The minister's address at the occasion was read by the director, Science Infrastructure, National Agency for Science and Engineering Infrastructure (NASeni), Professor Mohammed Alhaji Umar.

There was also a call for the establishment of centres of excellence in nanotechnology.

Speaking at the opening of the conference which was attended by more than 100 scholars from 35 institutions and agencies across Nigeria, the minister observed that LAUTECH's Nanotechnology Research Group has maintained its leadership position in nanotechnology research in the country with track records of publications,

collaboration, web presence and organization.

Led by Professor Agbaje Lateef, the group also tasked the federal, state governments and their agencies, as well as public-spirited organisations to prioritize and adequately fund researches in nano science and nanotechnology in Nigerian universities and ensure that curricula are re-engineered at various levels of education towards infusion of nano science and nanotechnology.