IMPROVING ACCESS TO EDUCATION
THROUGH
COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

Lesson from the experience of CITAD

CITAD

CENTRE FOR INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY AND
DEVELOPMENT

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CENTRE FOR INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT

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PREFACE

Education is not just a right: it is a key tool for empowerment. No country can develop without providing sound education to its citizens. It was in recognition of this that global community agreed on universal access to basic of education as one of the key targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MDGs targets were to be achieved by 2015. By 2016, there are still millions of Nigerian children of school going age that are not attending school. These children are spread all over the country, but with more of them in the northern part of the country. Kano State like all other states has huge numbers of these. Although some substantive progress has been made in terms of increasing enrolment at basic education, this is still far from reaching the target of the MDG.

   Getting all children to be enrolled in schools requires collaboration among all stakeholders. This is because there is a multiplicity of reasons and factors for the inability to get all children enrolled in school. They include resource constrain, poor management of available resources, low awareness about the importance and value of education among the poor, the increasing cost of education and poor policy implementation. This lack of collaboration among stakeholders is not just in limited to the education sector: it is also evident across other sectors. It was this that informed the design of the M4D intervention whose key outcome is to make Policy Makers (PMs) and Service Providers (SPs) more accountable to citizen's entitlements and articulated demands, especially those of excluded groups. But this is very critical in the education sector where service providers tend to ignore the contribution of citizens while citizens tend to think that government alone has the responsibility to provide for the educational of their children. Our intervention at CITAD was to bring these two into a mutual dialogue for government to recognize the value of engaging communities in the management and governance of schools while citizens to see the value of mobilizing local resources to compliment what government is able to deploy in their communities. In this way, a synergy can be built that

can optimize resources while responsive to the peculiarities of local exigencies.

We are happy to see the value in such approach. Where there is assumption that stick has to be used in coercing parents to enrol their children in school, we saw the same parents making spirited efforts to have school, where their children can enrol. We saw the demystification of the notion that parents in rural areas do not want to enrol their female children when at a go the enrolment of the girl-child in the community established school in *Shara* village outpaced that of the boys. We saw the value that communities would bring in terms of monitoring and supervision of schools, thus enhancing the supervisory role of government agencies that hamstrung by shortage of funds and in the process, enhance the prospects for improving learning processes in the schools and the potentials for better learning outcome. Such intervention needs to be supported and replicated so that they can eventually find a space as they are mainstreamed in official policies of governance not only of the education but also all other social service delivery sectors.

Y. Z. Ya'u,
Executive Director

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

In September 2015, the Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD) obtained a grant from the DFID funded programme, Mobilising for Development (M4D), to implement a project entitled Strengthening Local CBOs and Informal Institutions for Improved Access to Education in Some Selected Local Governments of Kano State. The goal was to improve access to quality basic education in Dawakin Tofa, Sumaila and Garun Malam Local governments of Kano state. This was part of the M4D programming as DFID Nigeria's contribution to strengthening demand and supply side actions to improve governance and the experience of service delivery at the local level towards achieving the MDGs + in the areas of health, education, water and sanitation and livelihoods.

While urban areas of Kano State schools are characterized by congestion due to overpopulation, rural areas schools struggle with high levels of absenteeism and poor completion rates.   Both congestion and poor completion rates are different sides of the same coin, which is the problem of the quality of education available. A congested classroom is not conducive for learning. This is obvious, but what is about a deserted classroom? It is often the result of absentee teachers, unqualified teachers, lack of classroom furniture or even the class (as cases are that you see classes under a tree) and lack of supervision by the relevant authorities. These discourage parents, who see their children wasting valuable time learning nothing. In other words high absenteeism and poor completion in a way are responses to the poor quality of education that is available in many rural areas. It is not, as is often stated, the result of ignorance.

But there is also another that is often only associated with urban areas and rarely raised in the rural community context. Because there are too many children crowding for a few spaces in urban areas, the issues of access become obvious. In rural areas, access is defined by the distance that a child has to cover in order to attend school. In many places, children as young as six years old have to trek over 5KM to attend school. The terrain could also be treacherous, with streams

to cross that have no bridge on them, making schooling in the rainy season impossible. Increasing access means, therefore,being school closer to the children, as well as addressing conditions that make some schools hard to reach.

This provided the context of our work in the three local government areas. All three can be considered as rural local governments but the wards that we focused on were definitively rural. And so in September, we set to intervene to see how working with communities could result in improvement in both access and quality of education.

This report provides a snapshot of the engagement. We came out more surprised than we went for. We found that, contrary to the assumption that rural people did not care about education, there is indeed a thirst for it. But this thirst for education is belied by what can be considered as the condition of suppressed demand. It is demand that could not be expressed because the people did not know what channel to use to express their demands or to even organize to think about how they could improve the quality of the education available to them, which would serve to restore their confidence in the system and ensure that their children do attend classes as and when due.

CHAPTER TWO: THE PROJECT AND ITS DESIGN

2.1. Introduction

On 24[th]December, 2013, the Kano State Government declared its intention o give free education at all levels for its indigenes. The declaration was made by the then Kano State Governor, Malam Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso, while presenting the 2014 budget before the members of the State House of Assembly. In justifying the intention of his administration on the new policy, Kwankwaso stated that "in our collective resolve to drive a knowledge base economy, government has already concluded arrangement to adopt a free education for all indigene at all levels: primary, secondary and tertiary institutions in the state."

In order to ensure the effective implementation of the new program, the education sector got the largest share of the pectoral allocation with over N20billion with the Ministry of Education getting N15.22billion; while its ministry for Higher Education counterpart was allocated N5.61billion. Out of the amount allocated, N1.3 billion was earmarked for the construction and furnishing of 268 additional classrooms in the state.

The Federal government has been showing interest in the development of the education sector in the State. For example, in the 2014 budget, the federal government made an allocation for the construction of additional structures in some exiting schools at some rural areas. This included an allocation of N100, 000,000 for the fencing and construction of two classroom blocks in Sumaila Gabas Primary School in Sumaila Local Government and N10, 000,000 for the construction of two blocks of 3 classrooms in Waziri Primary School of Chiromawa town in Garun Malam Local Government.

Despite all the commitments and increased interest in education by both the state and federal governments,enrollment into schools especially at the primary level,did not rise to the desired level. In most of the targeted LGAs, the number of children outside school outweighs the number of children in school. According to the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) of the three LGAs, more than 50% of the children that are supposed to be in school do not attend school, as indicated by the table 1.1:

Table 1.1: Number of children enrolled in schools from the three local Governments.

LGA		D/Tofa		
No of male pupil in school	No of female pupil in School	Total No of children	Total No of children supposed to be in school	Gap
18245	29320	47565	92500	44937

LGA		G/Malam		
No of male pupil in school	No of female pupil in School	Total No of children	Total No of children supposed to be in school	Gap
17966	2,8311	46277	89995	43718

LGA		Sumaila		
No of male pupil in school	No of female pupil Outside School	Total No of children	Total No of children supposed to be in school	Gap
17764	2,8608	4,6372	9,0179	4,3807

Source: TRS Units of the 3 LEAs

Several reasons contribute to the low enrollment of children.One of them is the existence of weak Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to engage the governments on such important issues. Also, these CBOs, PTA/SBMC and local education committees lack the capacity to conduct advocacy to the relevant authorities that can influence the improvement of the education of their communities.

Therefore, this project is aimed at sensitizing and strengthening Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and informal institutions

(PTA/SBMC, community education committees, etc) in the three local governments of Kano state for improved access and quality of education.

2.2. The Project Objectives

The specific objectives of the project include:

> To Improve engagement among stakeholders on Education (education committees, PTA/SBMC, etc.) in the three LGAs

> To increase level of the enrolment of children to school in the three LGAs

>To increase public participation in the monitoring and supervision of service delivery in education

> To improve data generation on the level of the child enrolment and quality of education for proper and effective planning and engagement.

2.3. Strategy/Methodology

Over the years, public education provisioning has tended to view the communities as passive recipients of the educational services provided by government. To a large extent, this had fostered an attitude in which community expectation in the Kano State is that government having to provide everything needed to run schools. Because of this, government also held to the management of schools in a way that did not provide space for community participation. Recently, this is slowly showing some signs of changing with the experimentation of establishing community-based school management committees, with representatives from communities, which have the responsibility for providing a certain layer of supervisory role to school heads. By and large, however, authority resides with the government agencies.

Yet, experience has shown that if communities are cultivated and incorporated into the education provision services, they will not only

provide better supervision of schools but also be able to mobilize local resources to augment what government provides. Community participation also is a potent tool for ensuring child enrolment and good attendance. Thus, mobilizing community participation would help not only in addressing the perennial problem of low enrolment of pupils in rural areas, but also help in improving quality by ensuring that teachers and schools in general are properly supervised. It was in this context that we developed our framework for this project, which was to engender community participation in the education processes. Our methodology, therefore, rested on three legs:

1. Conduct community sensitization and mobilization to get communities appreciate the importance of education.
2. The mobilization of critical voices in the communities to provide support for the enrolment campaign, as well as undertake to become volunteer monitors for education processes in their communities.
3. The engagement of all the stakeholders in the efforts to addressing the various problems associated with education in rural settings.

To operationalize this framework, CITAD identified community-based organizations in the different wards of the local governments and trained them to own the project and be the key implementers of the activities planned for it. It also supported the Parent Teachers Associations in the communities in an effort to get them to become popular organs of citizens' participation in education at the basic level.

2.4. Project Activities
The project was implemented using the following activities:

> Familiarization Visits.

> Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) on the factors hindering children enrolment to schools and the condition of education in the three local governments.

- > Community mobilization.
- > Capacity Building Workshop on Budget Tracking and Advocacy Skills.
- > Refresher Training for Teachers on lesson notes, lesson plan and classroom maintenance
- > School monitoring visit
- > Public Policy Dialogue Workshop.
- > Advocacy Visits to the State Commissioner of Education and State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB)

2.5. Implementation Plan

Activity	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	feb	Mar
Familiarization visit							
Formation of advocacy group							
Baseline survey							
Presentation of baseline report							
Training Cluster members on advocacy skills							
Training service providers on tracking service delivery							
Training cluster members on budget tracking							
Advocacy visits							
Policy dialogue workshop							
Mobilization for enrolment							
Mobilization for school attendance							
School monitoring by cluster members							

CHAPTER THREE: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN ACTION

3.1. Introduction

Campaigns for increasing enrolment in rural areas often fail because it is simply assumed that the only reason why rural people do not send their wards to schools is ignorance. Following from this mindset, campaigns tend to be coercive and when eventually parents are forced into registering their children in the schools, there is no reason to expect that these children will continue to attend classes regularly. A successful campaign for increasing enrolment must therefore be built around a sound understanding of the factors responsible for parents not being able to either enroll or retain their children in schools. Once these problems are identified, then the campaign can start with finding solutions to them as its role in its effort to get more children into school.

Consistent with this, we commenced our project with the intervention of a survey to understand what parents think about school in general and why their children are at home.

3.2. Familiarization Tour

The entry phase of the intervention was a goodwill building tour to get the buy-in of the members of the communities. This took the members of the project team to round all the 12 target wards of the three local governments, visiting local education officials, community leaders, the representatives of community based organizations (CBOs) , members of the Parents Teachers Associations (PTAs), headmasters and teachers of primary schools in the communities. The tour was helped by the fact that M4D had liaison officers in the local governments who assisted in identifying contacts and fixing appointments for meetings.

During the visits, those visited were briefed about the objectives of the project, the activities to be carried and their roles in the intervention. The team sought their support and cooperation. This familiarization tour not only allowed us to get the buy-in of the local stakeholders, but also helped in identifying the CBOs that later became cluster members of the project. It also afforded us the

opportunity to have a fair understanding of the geography of the distribution of schools in the communities as well as the state of the schools.

CITAD Team with Vice Chairman, Dawakin Tofa during the Familiarization Visit.

Kamal Garba of CITAD taking minutes during familiarization meeting with CBOs members in Sumaila.

3.3 The Survey and its Findings

In October 2015, a baseline survey was conducted in the three local governments. It is aimed to find the factors hindering children enrolment in schools and the decay of education in the three local governments areas. The survey also sought to assess the major challenges of the accessibility of education in the selected local governments areas. The survey involved three instruments, namely Key Informant Interview (KII) with policy makers, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with some service providers, CBOs, PWDs, adolescent girls, community members and the administration of questionnaires.

One hundred and twenty (120) people were selected for the Key Informant Interview (KII) in the four M4D wards of the three local governments, 10 in each ward. Twelve (12) FGDs, one in each of the 12 wards were conducted.

Usman Sani Aliyu of CITAD during FGD with Rimi Ward CBO members of Sumaila Local Government

Kamilu Isah Ahmad of CITAD during FGD with Tumfafi Ward CBO members of DawakinTofa Local Government

3.4. Responding to the Survey Findings: Stakeholders Forum

Following the survey, CITAD sought to share the findings with key stakeholders and to engage them in addressing the problems the survey had revealed. Thus, on 15th March, 2016, it organized a Stakeholders Forum as Policy Dialogue on Improving Access and Quality of Education. The Forum, which was attended by over 50 participants, and was held at the Murtala Muhammed Library, Kano. The findings were presented and discussed. The Forum agreed on the following as means of addressing the problems on education in the state:

> The society must fully support the education sector, as well as move from holding conferences to implementing the resolutions of the conferences.

- SUBEB needs to be organizing workshops to PTA/SBMC in order to enlighten and educate them on what is expected of them so that the sector will move forward.
- Community leaders should pay regular courtesy visits to the wealthy and others that are willing to assist and solicit their intervention in the education sector
- Government should create a joint account and provide autonomy on resource disbursement and the community must be watchful of how funds are spent.
- The school curriculum should be reviewed to suit the changing needs and situations.
- SUBEB must support the community groups and volunteers with structures, facilities and manpower where necessary.
- Remuneration, promotion, annual increment and the general welfare of teachers ought to be seriously looked at.
- Ministry for local government affairs must be engaged in order to tackle problems from the grassroots.
- CITAD should expand their effort by engaging more development partners.
- Reposition the thinking and mindset of the society, government, educational bodies and everybody in the society.
- Overhaul the education sector and make it a participatory activity.
- Basic education should be made free and compulsory for all.
- Educational agencies must be accountable to the resources they are allocated.
- Government must ensure the quality and welfare of teachers and enact laws to punish parents who stop their children from going to school.
- The government must equally cooperate, strengthen and work with relevant development partners on education.
- It must also involve traditional leaders and community groups to help manage education at the grassroots level.
- Local government chairmen must also liaise with the community for annual budgets and estimates on education.

Hon. Umar S. Muhammad, permanent Member 1, making comments during the Public Policy Dialogue Workshop.

3.5. Mobilization for Enrolment and Attendance

One of the factors inhibiting enrolment and poor learning outcomes in schools is the lack of community involvement in the education processes, especially at the school level. While it is acknowledged that school-Based Management Committees could provide community voices in the management of schools, this has not happened due to the low capacity and lack of the institutionalization of this structure. This problem can be addressed by creating a level of education-conscious people as clusters who would not only sensitize the community to support the enrolment drive but also provide community voice in the management and supervision of schools by ensuring that community representatives on SBMCs are active and accountable to the community, as well as on their own undertake the regular periodic monitoring of school activities, including mobilizing parents and guardians to ensure that they not only enroll their kids, but also attend classes as required by the school calendar. The CITAD

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approach for this project, therefore, rests on two legs, developing citizens' clusters on education and enhancing the capacity of the members of the SMB through training, experience sharing and access to tools for effective school management.

In line with this, after consultations with various community based organizations in the three local governments, CITAD was able to find partners in all the 12 wards of the three local government areas. The CBOs were invited to nominate volunteers who could work as education monitors in their communities with the objective of helping to drive enrolment, consistent attendance and the monitoring of schools activities.

To equip them to perform this role, a one-day training on Mobilizing for Enrolment and Attendance was organized in each of the twelve wards of the project. These series of training were conducted between 30th December, 2015 1st January with training taking place simultaneously in four places. A total of 178 people attended the training.

The trained volunteers were then deployed to their communities and invited to carry out house-to-house campaigns. To ensure effectiveness, the volunteers and CITAD teams had earlier visited the community leaders in the all the wards during which they were informed of the objectives of the campaign and their cooperation and support solicited, which were assured.

The campaigns were also complemented with community sensitization meetings, which were held with parents in all the wards. These meetings were coordinated and convened by the local CBOs. During the four months the volunteers worked, each week they visited the assigned schools and collected attendance records therefrom.

Community sensitization meeting in Gediya Ward of Sumaila Local Government

3.6. Monitoring and Reporting Attendances

In each ward, a team of volunteers was constituted that carried out house to house campaigns to get children either registered or attending classes regularly. The local monitoring teams, along with the project team of CITAD, met monthly to receive and deliberate on the reports and review the situation. Monthly reports of the attendance for each school were considered. The results of the monitoring for the months of November to April for the three local governments are consolidated below. Note that December was not included because it was a holiday period. It has been seen that in all the three local governments there have been a consistent rise in attendance.

Chart 1:Enrolment and attendance records for the schools Garun Malam Local Government

Legend:
- Number of the Pupils in the Schools Attendance Register
- Number of the Pupils Present
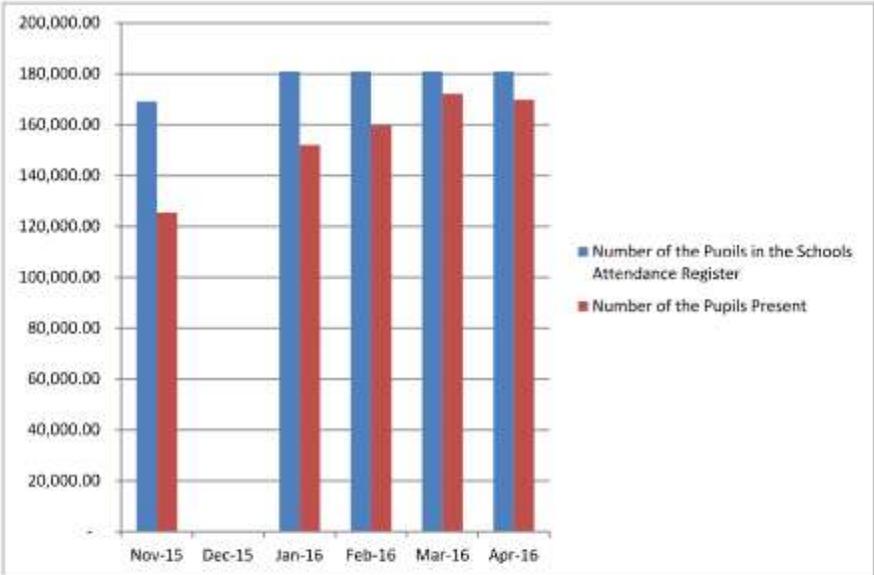
Chart 2: Enrolment and attendance records for the schools in Dawakin Tofa Local Government

Legend:
- Number of the Pupils in the Schools Attendance Register
- Number of the Pupils Present
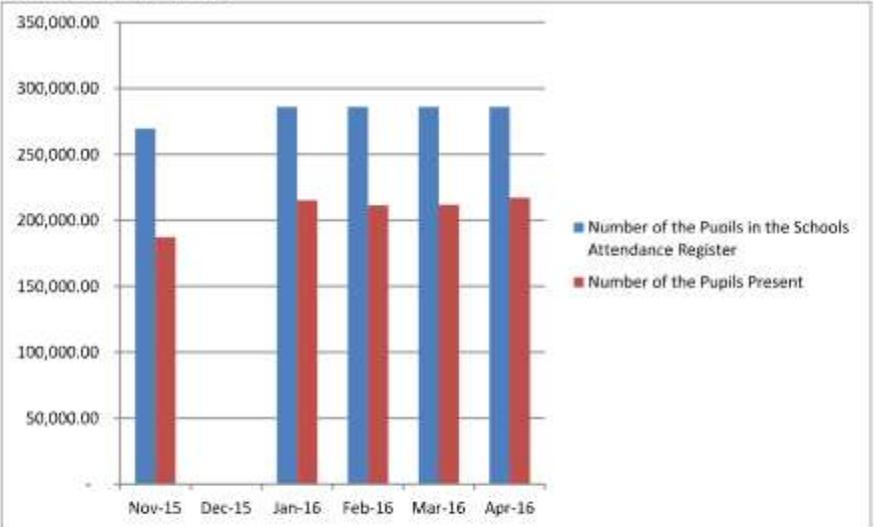
Chart 3: Enrolment and attendance records for the schools in Sumaila
Local Government
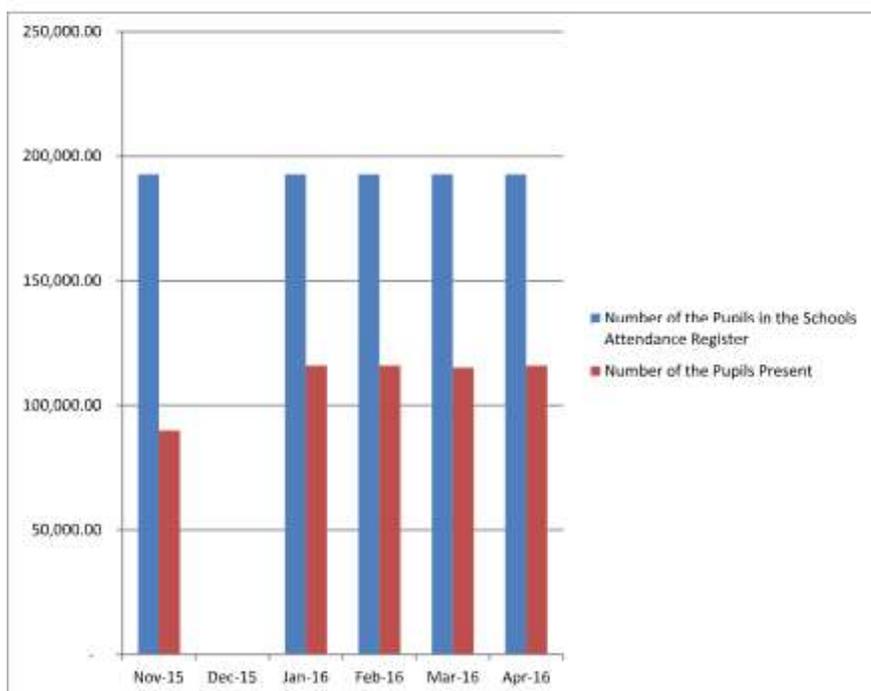
Enrolment could organically be observed since enrolment to schools
is done only once in the year and had already been done in October
just around the point of the commencement of the project. A
definitive statement on enrolment for the individual schools would
have to wait till the next round of the enrollment exercise. However,
given that new schools and classes have been established during the
period and pupil enrolled, these were examples of enrolment
resulting from the campaign. In this sense, therefore, there was
definitely an increase in the overall enrolment profiles of the local
governments.

3.7. Responding to Teachers Needs

A key problem is teacher quality. As the survey revealed, over 50% of the teachers were not qualified. Consequently, many were not using lesson notes for their classes. It was indeed found that many of these teachers did not know how to write lesson notes. It was, therefore, decided to organize a refresher training course for them on teaching techniques and lessons note writing. Malam Umar Muhammad of Kano State Senior Secondary School Management Board, a former teacher himself, facilitated the training attended by 36 teachers from the primary schools in the 12 wards of the local governments.

Malam Umar Muhammad of KSSSSMB facilitating the Refresher Training on Lesson Plan, Lesson Note and Classroom Maintenance

3.8. Community Advocacy for Higher Support

Among the many factors that community members gave as discouraging attendance in schools by pupils were the inadequate number of teachers, lack of classroom furniture, poor supervision of schools, lack of learning and instruction materials, etc. while parents could shoulder the burden of books and other pupils' needs,

government as the proprietor of the schools should be able to maintain school buildings, provide effective supervision, address classroom furniture shortage and post qualified teachers to schools. Many felt that the supervisory role of the local education departments needed to be enhanced.

We reasoned these have to be tacked through dialogue between the communities and the government. For this reason, CITAD approached both the Local Education authorities in the three local governments and the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) which is the responsibility for primary and junior secondary schools in the state to agree to receive an advocacy visit from the communities. The advocacy visit was held on 8th March, 2016 when 19 delegates consisting of representatives of Community leaders, CBOs, PTAs as well as project team members of CITAD converged at the headquarters of SUBEB in Kano.

The advocacy team was received on behalf of SUBEB by Hajiya Gaji Muhammad, the Director Community Mobilization. While Sagiru Ado made the opening speech, it felt on Saidu of the Sitti Forum to speak on behalf of the community. Among the issues raised were the shortage of primary schools in the rural communities, lack of girls secondary schools, which is affecting the adolescent girl education and forcing most of them to become house girls, the shortage of teachers, especially female teachers, interruption in the free feeding programs that is affecting the pupil attendance and the dilapidated nature of most of the schools. Responding, Hajiya Gaji Muhammad assured the team that government was doing its best to see to the improvement of basic education in the state. She also promised that SUBEB would be part of the Public Policy Dialogue workshop planned to discuss the findings of the baseline survey on basic education in the three local governments.

Community leaders, CBOs, PTAs and Project Team During the Advocacy Visit to SUBEB

Ado Shehu presenting some CITAD publications to Hajiya Gaji of SUBEB during the advocacy visit

During the familiarization tour, it was discovered that community members did not have the skill for advocacy. To remedy this, CITAD on 29th November, 2015 CITAD organized a training workshop on Advocacy in order to enhance the capacity of the cluster members to conduct successful advocacy. The training was conducted in each of the three local governments, with 20 participants each, making a total of 60 participants. They included headmasters, PWD's, adolescent girls and the ward level CBO members. The training for Dawakin Tofa held on 14th November at the LEA Office, Sumaila, on 15th November and that of Garun Malam on 16th November, 2015. The programmes were facilitated by Sagiru Ado Abubakar and Hauwa Dauda Attah in all the three centres. Key issues of advocacy identified at the trainings were:

> Provision of enough teachers in our schools
> Punctuality of the teachers
> Community members to participate in the running and governance of our schools
> Enrollment of PWDs in our schools
> Provision of special needs for PWDs in our schools
> Ensuring that adolescent girls complete basic education in our communities
> Ensure that no child of schooling age do not go to school
> Availability of teaching and learning facilities in our schools

CHAPTER FOUR: THE SHARA COMMUNITY AS A CASE STUDY
4.1. Introduction

During the project, CITAD initiated monthly meetings with the Advocacy Group on a School Monitoring Visit. The meetings with the advocacy group were conducted to collect data from the CBO members on the status of education, education facilities and the general information in relation with the attendance and punctuality of the teachers and the students in the schools of the wards.

During these meetings, it was discovered that pupils from *Shara* in Sumaila Local Government could not go school during the raining season because the school, located in Matigwai, is cut by a river for which there is no bridge to cross. Moreover, the distance between Shara and Matigwai is over 5 KM.Many young children find it difficult to trek that far. This has meant that most children in this community were not going to school.

On further reflection, members of the community felt that it would be more useful if a school could be set up in the village itself, rather than for the children to be going to Matigwai. A school in the village was considered viable given the large number of school-age children in the community, with over 500 school-ages mostly out of schools. These reflections led to the idea of the community coming together to set up the school, rather than wait for the government to do so.

4.2. The Educational Profile of the Shara Community

Shara is a typical rural community in the Sitti ward of Sumaila local government, with a relatively modest rainfall and one of the few left natural forests, this is fertile agrarian enclave in the state. Not surprising, the people of the communities are farmers. But like all typical rural communities, it hardly feels the impact of government. There is no hospital, no clinic and no school. With a population of over 3000 people, in over 400 households, there is a sufficient number of children to fill a small school. According to Survey indicated as of 2016, there were over 600 children of school-going age. Few of these had been enrolled in a primary school in nearby Matigwai, which is about 5KM, and passable only during the

dry season when the river that separates two communities has dried out. Both the distance and the seasonal disruption by the lack of a bridge across the river meant that a number of those who had been enrolled at the Maitugwai Primary school had long dropped out, joining the league of those who had never been enrolled. At the school, there was only one person who attested to having completed primary school and no more. During the electioneering campaign, politicians could visit them and promise to construct road and a bridge across the stream but never about establishing a school in the village. Beyond the idyllic tranquility of this seeing rustic and unaffected settlement, there is indeed a fervent thirst for education. That was what we discovered.

4.3. Community Responses to Establishing a School

At a meeting on 26th February, 2016 in a spontaneous show of commitment to the setting up the school, land was offered for the proposed school and soon members of the community pledged to contribute to raise money to pay for the land. But in the meantime, the schools should start. The Village Head, who was chairing the invited suggestions and a number of hands, suggested the old mosque as the temporary site for the school. A new mosque had recently been built and so the old one was not being used for prayers. This was accepted and a temporary site had been settled. Next was where to get the teachers. This was not a government school, so they could not think of government immediately sending teachers. Moreover, as experience had shown in other communities, teachers hardly like to stay in rural areas and no one of such will want to stay in a new community school whose fate was uncertain.

The next problem was to find teachers. As reported earlier, there was only one person in the village whoever completed primary school and that was years ago. He is now almost 70 years. It was here that partnership and networking stepped in. Members of our volunteer team in Sitti agreed to be coming as volunteer teachers until permanent teachers are found. Mal Ibrahim Abubakar now acts as the Headmaster of the school and is assisted by Malam Naziru Musa.

4.4. Engaging Other Actors

Setting up a school is an autonomous act of the community. The school has to be recognized and accepted by the relevant education authorities. It is also needed to be supported by other actors. Moreover, it needed facilities that the communities might not be able to provide in the short term. Thus, CITAD worked with the community members to reach out to the critical education stakeholders in the state, namely the local education authority in Sumaila Local Government, SUBEB and the State Ministry of Education. The Local Government authority was very supportive right from the very beginning. CITAD once again visited SUBEB, this time to inform them of the establishment of the school and to invite SUBEB to attend the its public unveiling that was being planned, as well as recognize and support it even if it was not going to immediately take it over. We requested for an advocacy visit to the Deputy Governor, who is also the State Commissioner of Education. He responded and on 17th May received a delegation of over 20 from both the communities and CITAD. The Commissioner was briefed of the project and of the setting up of the community school in Shara. A member of the delegation, Saidu Saleh Sitti, spoke on the support communities needed to enhance education in their areas.

4.5. Unveiling the Shara Community School

As an advocacy strategy, members of the Community agreed to do a formal unveiling of the school to the public. This was to make a formal declaration of the existence of the school, showcase the community spirit of the Shara people and get the attention of the relevant stakeholders to support the effort. The date for the unveiling was fixed for 19th May, 2016. In preparation for this, CITAD had already invited both SUBEB and the State Ministry of Education as well as the media. Members of the community also invited members of nearby communities as part of their solidarity network.

The unveiling held in the morning of that date in front of the school.

The Deputy Governor/Commissioner of Education was presented by Dr. Bakaru Ado Hussain, Special Adviser to the Deputy Governor on Education while the SUBEB team was led by the Permanent Commissioner 1 of SUBEB, Hon Umar S. Muhammad. The community was led by a community leader, Musa Audu, while the Village Head, who was ill-disposed, was represented by the Walikin Shara, Said Saleh. The District Head of Sitti was represented by Mal Isyaku Adamu. Idris Sankira Matagwai led the delegation from the neighboring village of Matagwai. Other guests were the Local Government Education Secretary, Alh Sabo Aliyu Rimi, Saidu Saleh Sitti, the chair of Sitti Forum, and Alhaji Balarabe Danlami, PRO SUBEB.

Public Unveiling of the Shara Community School and Distribution of School Uniforms and Exercise Books

The event featured speeches by the guests and community leaders. The highlight was the distribution of uniforms and branded exercise books by CITAD to the pupils enrolled in the schools. Then came the galore of other contributions to the school. The Education Secretary of the Local Government promised to immediately deploy teachers to the school. SUBEB promised to provide chairs and desks to the school while the representative of the Deputy Governor said government would look into taking it over.

4.6.   Support from CITAD

CITAD as an anchor organization in the project set up a fund raiser at the organizational level. The aim of the fund raiser was for the staff of the organization to give their contribution toward the setting up of the community school in the village. Out of this effort, 68 sets of school uniforms and 300 exercise books were donated by the staff of the organization.

CITAD also mobilized other stakeholders to support the initiatives. During the official unveiling of the school, which CITAD in conjunction with the community organized, a number of the stakeholders like the State Commissioner of Education, SUBEB, the local education council and several community leaders promised various support and assistance to the schools. SUBEB, in particular, agreed to provide chairs and immediately deploy teachers to the schools.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. Introduction

The project has recorded modest successes in mobilizing the communities to become involved in the education processes. Their spirit has been fired and community members taken steps to organizing themselves to mobilize resources to support their educational needs. It has demonstrated the utility of the framework we proposed and opened up new vistas that could serve the way forward.

5.2. Key Outcomes of the Project

A modest increase in enrolment has been recorded across all the wards of the three local governments and, on average, for all, the enrolment figure rose from 169,159.00 to 180,955.00 in Garun Malam M4D wards, from 269,520.00 to 285,903.00 in Dawakin Tofa M4D wards and from 180,500.00 to 192,736 in Sumaila M4D wards over the period:

> There was an increase in class attendance as demonstrated by the data in charts of attendances above.

> Teacher attendance has equally improved due to the monitoring by members of the community.

> Skills and interest in teachers have been enhanced.

> There has been some expansion to class availability, which improved accessibility. For example, in Rumo town, a newly afternoon session was opened by the CBO members as a result of this engagement to cater for children who could not be accommodated during the morning session.

> Community school has been established where none existed, thus bringing education closer to the children of those communities.

> Number of teachers has increased with the mobilization of volunteers, who were either former teachers or members of the community who have decided to donate a few hours of their time to helping in teaching in schools

In their communities.

> A Community Girls Secondary School is being started in Agalawa primary school in the Makwaro ward of Garun Malam Local Government having secured the cooperation of the headmaster and PTA members of Agalawa primary school, who agreed to allocate some classes in the school for the proposed Girls Junior Secondary School.

5.3. Celebrating Success Stories

There is much to learn from the Shara experience. By all standards, Shara is a typical rural community. This is a community where the only celebrated "graduate" was a primary school leaver of more than 30 years ago. Since then, no one had ever completed primary schooling not to talk of going to secondary school. Yet, it was this same community that readily embraced the campaign for enrolment and went out of their way to lay the foundation for a community school.

Within a few days of the agreement to set up the school, over 130 pupils had been registered. There is much to say about this. First registration took place without the usual government campaign of using stick and carrot. No government effort to entice them just as there was no effort at compelling them. At any rate, government that could not provide a school in the place could not take the option of the use of the stick. Even more surprising was that, unlike most other places, including urban Kano, where a conditional cash transfer had to be used to get girls enrolled, here it was the love of education that made the parents willingly enroll their daughters, recording an enrolment ratio that put females above males, a reversal of what happens overall in the state. There is always the notion that village people do not appreciate education. But Shara people have demystified this. Shara was not just an exception. In our intervention, we came across a number of communities whose thirst for education was very clear. For example, on their own, the members of the Agawala agreed to set up a junior girls secondary school, so that their daughters could progress beyond the primary school. This has been made possible by utilizing a classroom from a nearby primary school. Similarly, members of Rumo community agreed to start an afternoon class to accommodate children who could not find places in the

limited space available in the primary school in the village.

The Shara experience shows the resilience of village people whose demand for education had been suppressed because policy makers did not understand fully why there was too much reluctance to enroll children in school. It is worth celebrating, with a view that many more Sharas would discover themselves and government will find that it is much easier to win the campaign for the enrolment provided.Of course, it would work on its own. In particular, governments need to work with communities and not pretend they are working for communities.

5.4. Outstanding Issues

> The period of the intervention, just over six months, is not enough to access the sustainability of the communities to this new spirit, but encouragement and support from government is needed.

> We did not plan for the measurement or assessment of learning outcomes, which will have allowed us to find out if quality is increasing or not. This is something that needs follow up.

> Issues of replication. There is the need to replicate this in other local governments and expand, so that the lessons learnt can be mainstreamed in the education system of the state.

> We have come across many communities like Shara where a similar problem of lack of schools has been raised. We have not been able to devote the time to follow up to ensure that, like it has been done in Shara, these communities are also assisted to establish local community schools. We hope that others might learn from the Shara experience and come to their assistance of these communities. They include, for example:

> The three local governments lack girls junior secondary schools resulting in the adolescent girls abandoning the study after completing primary school education.

> There is the need to increase the level of engagement on house-to-house campaigns on education and sensitization lectures due to their impact on the enrollment of primary school pupils.

5.5. Recommendations
1.   SUBEB needs to be organizing workshops to PTA/SBMC in order to enlighten and educate them on what is expected for them, so that the sector will move forward.
2.   Community leaders should pay regular courtesy visits to the wealthy and others that are willing to assist and solicit their intervention in the education sector.
3.   Government should create a joint account and provide autonomy on resources disbursement and the community must be watchful of how funds are spent.
4.   The school curriculum should be reviewed to suit the changing needs and situations of the communities.
5.   SUBEB must support the community groups and volunteers with structures, facilities and manpower where necessary.
6.   Remuneration, promotion, annual increment and the general welfare of teachers ought to be seriously looked at.
7.   Ministry for local government affairs must be engaged in order to tackle problems from the grassroot.
8.   CITAD should expand its effort to include other local governments in the state by engaging more development partners.
9.   Overhaul the education sector and make it a participatory activity.
10.   Basic education should be made free and compulsory for all.
11.   Educational agencies must be accountable to the resources they are allocated.
12.   Government must ensure the quality and welfare of teachers and enact laws to punish parents who stop their children from going to school.

13. The government must equally cooperate, strengthen and work with relevant development partners on education.
14. It must also involve traditional leaders and community groups to help to manage education at the grassroots level.
15. Local government chairmen must also liaise with the community for annual budgets and estimates on education.

ABOUT CITAD

CITAD (www.citad.org) is a capacity building civil society organization whose activities covers research, advocacy, training and publicity in all areas of ICTs. Its vision is; a knowledge-based democratic society free of hunger while its mission is; using ICTs to empower citizens for a just and knowledge-based society that is anchored on sustainable and balanced development.

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