



**UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES
ONDO CITY**

**TRANSFORMING NIGERIA'S
EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM:
LOOKING BACK AND LOOKING FORWARD**

**Distinguished^{4th}
Guest Lecture**

Delivered By
His Excellency Mallam Nasir Ahmad el-Rufai, OFR
Governor, Kaduna State

At the Main Auditorium, University of Medical Sciences,
Odosida Campus, Oke-Igbala Street, Ondo City

On Monday, 30th April, 2018



UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES ONDO CITY

Mission Statement

The Mission of the University of Medical Sciences (UNIMED) is to provide integrated education and research of exceptional quality in all health-related sciences; to expand access to compassionate, comprehensive and high-quality healthcare for under-served populations and to lead the scientific pathway for reducing the burden of disease in our society.

Vision Statement

The vision of UNIMED is to be a thriving medical and health sciences University, locally, nationally and internationally recognized for excellence and innovation in health education and research, with ability to translate research findings for the improvement of health.

PAST LECTURES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MEDICAL SCIENCES

Distinguished Guest Lectures:

- A. (i) *We Reap What We Sow:*
Emeritus Professor Kelsey A. Harrison, MD, Dsc, FRCOG, FMCOG
- (ii) *A Case for a Paradigm Shift in Health Sciences Education in Nigeria:* Prof. Joseph A. Balogun, PT, Ph.D, FACSM, FAS
- (iii) *The Future of Health and Promise of Primary Health Care in Nigeria:* Prof. Muhammad Ali Pate (Former Minister of State for Health)
Professor of Global Health, Duke University Global Institute, North Carolina, USA

Annual Public Lecture

- B. (i) *Some Efficacious Nigerian Anti-Cancer Herbal Remedies:*
Joseph I. Okogun, PhD., DIC, FAS, FAAS, FRSC, FCSN, FNSP
- (ii) *New Universities as New Opportunity to reform Nigeria's Tertiary Educational System:*
Oladapo Walker, MB.BS. (Ib.), Dr. (Med) Sci. (Karolinska), FMCP, FWAP

Founder's Day Lectures

- C. (i) *The Universities of our Dream*
Prof. Abubakar Adamu Rasheed, mni, MFR
(Executive Secretary, NUC)
- (ii) *The Secrets of Founding*
Aare Afe Babalola, OFR, CON, SAN, LL.D (London), LL.D (Lagos), LL.D (Jos), FNAILS, FCI.Arb, FNSE Founder and Chancellor, Afe Babalola University, Ado Ekiti, President, Institute of Arbitration of Nigeria

FOREWORD

On behalf of Senate, Staff and Students of the University of Medical Sciences (UNIMED), It is with great pleasure and delight that I introduce this fourth in the series of quarterly Distinguished Guest Lectures of the University. The series of lectures was started in 2016 in efforts to strongly position the University to lead the pathway for addressing the major health and educational challenges facing our dear country. We believe this approach will help to focus priority attention on some of the gaps and unmet needs for the equitable and effective delivery of social services that will enable us attain the goals of development in the country.

These lectures have also become inspirational and motivational for our staff and students in a number of ways. By inviting some of the best minds and intellectuals to deliver the lectures, the university hopes to achieve the objective of enabling our staff and students to meet with some of the most exemplary and creative minds as a way to impact the next generation of leaders for effective development in this country. Additionally, we believe that this University should offer a platform for some of the most incisive and provocative thinkers in the country to explain their positions, in order to expand and deepen the discourse on essential national issues. Only in that way will the University be contributing to resolving evolving national issues in an objective and evidence-based manner.

The first guest lecturer in this series of lectures was Professor Kelsey Harrison, NNOM, FAS, a world renowned professor of obstetrics and gynaecology, and former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Port Harcourt on the very thoughtful subject “We reap what we sow”. Indeed, we continue to reap what we sow. The

second lecture which took place in May 2017 was delivered by Professor Joseph Balogun a Distinguished Professor of Physiotherapy at the Chicago State University, USA, on the topic “The case for a paradigm shift in the education of healthcare professionals in Nigeria”. The third lecture in the series titled “the future of health and the promise of primary health care in Nigeria” was delivered by former Minister of State for Health, Professor Muhammad Pate in October 2017.

The three lectures focused on frontline issues in our nation's healthcare delivery, the first being on the need to build political will for addressing health as an essential issue in governance, while the other identified innovations and creativity in the design and implementation of training curricular in the training of health care professionals, as an approach for the effective delivery of various health mandates for the country. The third lecture identified salient issues relating to the development of primary health care, and how this approach can be consolidated to ensure universal access to quality health care for all Nigerian citizens.

Today's lecture, titled “transforming Nigeria's educational system: looking back and looking forward” is no less groundbreaking. The tendency has always been for academics and related institutions to pontificate about educational reforms in this country. It is often rare that we hear from government officials and policymakers in a didactical and conceptual manner on their understanding of the educational sector and what needs to be done to promote social change in the sector. Yet, government officials hold the key to educational recovery on a sustainable and effective manner, especially with focus on achieving positive outcomes at scale. This lecture aims to bridge the gap between academics, policymakers and government officials on what needs to be done to recover the

Nigerian educational system in ways to galvanize and ensure the future development of our great country.

Not too long ago, the Executive Governor of Kaduna State, His Excellency Mallam Nasir Ahmad El-Rufai, OFR was engaged in an interesting public debate regarding his plan to improve the standards of teaching and pedagogy in Kaduna State. We followed the discussion and the debate with great interest, especially noting the bold and imaginative steps the Governor insisted on taking to recover the lost educational glory of his state. What was evident from that debate is that whatever was happening in Kaduna state has implications for the educational development in other States of the country. The difference was that as Governor, Mallam El-Rufai was bold and imaginative and decided not to be encumbered by the politics of the matter in pushing for what he thought was best for the future development of youth in Kaduna State. I remember that during this period I watched a discussion on Channels Television when the Deputy Governor of Kaduna State was asked whether the Governor, Mallam El-Rufai was not afraid of the possible negative political backlash he would receive by insisting on improving the standard of teaching in his State. His reply was remarkable – that the Governor would prefer to be remembered for the changes he made to improve the development of the State in four years rather than being in charge for 8 years allowing things to continue in a “business-as-usual” without making efforts to change them, which at the end would not benefit the state. His reply indicated that the Governor would prefer to be remembered for doing the right things in Kaduna State, rather than simmering to social opportunism that would be harmful to the future development of the state.

It is within this context that we have decided to invite His Excellency, Governor Nasir El-Rufai to deliver today's

Distinguished Guest lecture. The University of Medical Sciences would like to be associated with visionary leaders who demonstrate courage and conviction on important social change issues, especially those issues that under-pin this country's slow pace of development. Clearly, the Governor of Kaduna State, Mallam Nasir El-Rufai is one such leader in this country today. We believe his lecture will help to stimulate our thinking about leadership roles and how positive leadership engagement can help the development of incisive reforms for social development in this country.

I had the opportunity to read every page of Mallam El-Rufai's book titled "the Accidental Public Servant" published in 2013. That book epitomizes the stuff our Distinguished Guest lecturer of today is made of: a bold and incisive leader, highly knowledgeable about contemporary national issues, a goal-pusher and goal getter extra-ordinary, and one of the most convincing patriots of our time.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, the University of Medical Sciences is indeed, very happy that Governor El-Rufai has been able to find time from his extensive State and National engagements to deliver today's lecture. We take it as evidence of the critical importance of this University to the emergent trends in educational development in this great country.

Finally, I wish to extend my deep appreciation and gratitude to our visitor and the Executive Governor of Ondo State, Arakunrin Rotimi Akeredolu, SAN for the tremendous support and encouragement he has given to the University since his assumption of office. He has been a pillar of strength propelling us to reach even higher levels of development, and allowing us to grow without hindrances and with great mentoring and good leadership examples. We pray that the good Lord will continue to

bles and protect him. We are also grateful to all our supporters and Friends of UNIMED and to our Royal fathers and Distinguished Guests who have joined us at today's lecture.

I thank you all for coming, and wish you safe return to your various destinations.

Professor Friday Okonofua, MD, PhD, FRCOG, FMCOG, FAS
Vice-Chancellor

THE CITATION OF MALAM NASIR EL-RUFAI, OFR

Malam Nasir Ahmad El-Rufai cannot be missed in a crowd. His compact size is in inverse proportion to the immensity of his many talents and the effervescence of his charm. You can hardly meet a more self-assured man, a person who values the life of the mind, invests in its cultivation and repeatedly stands out for his application of intellect and logic. He has been described as one of the most educated and able Nigerians in any field, and certainly one of the very best to have held public office, and one of the most committed to the public good. Nasir El-Rufai's talents are strengthened by a tough character built on the old values that are anchored on hard work, integrity and resilience.

This awesome talent was nurtured from this very land, and he has devoted himself to public service to make it a better place for all. Nasir El-Rufai was born to Malam Ahmad Rufai, a native of Zaria who was then living in rural Daudawa in 1960, the year of independence. After completing primary school in Kaduna, his mind was sharpened at Barewa College and further refined at the Ahmadu Bello University where he graduated with first class honours in Quantity Surveying. In 1982, shortly after his return to Kaduna following his NYSC in Abeokuta, he founded El-Rufai & Partners, a foremost Quantity Surveying consultancy firm, and he came into prominence as a leader in his professional field while also investing in the future of young people by teaching part-time in ABU, his alma mater. Not only did he run a successful business, El-Rufai also acquired an MBA and sufficient training in computer science to ginger him into becoming one of the first investors in the Internet Service Provision sector in Nigeria. He made friends

across Nigeria who admire him for his strength of character, integrity and compassion.

The sheer breadth of El-Rufai's knowledge, his broad mind, the clarity of his analysis and his competence soon brought him to the attention of General Abdulsalam Abubakar, who in 1998 appointed him to the Policy Implementation and Monitoring Committee (PIMCO) which was charged to help manage the transition programme that led to the handover to a democratically elected government in 1999. In that capacity, he interfaced with the World Bank, the IMF and other agencies, and helped draft the legislation that established the Bureau of Public Enterprises, BPE. Little did he know that it would be his lot to one day lead the BPE, but the same qualities that had brought him to limelight also impressed President Olusegun Obasanjo who charged him in 1999 to run the privatisation programme as Director-General of the BPE.

Malam Nasir El-Rufai distinguished himself at the BPE, showcasing a clear-headedness, tenacity and courage that persuaded President Obasanjo to saddle him in 2003 with the difficult job of managing Abuja, as the minister of the Federal Capital Territory. The compact malam did not disappoint as he tackled that giant challenge. He restored Abuja to the dream of its founders, gave Nigeria its first computerised land registry and made it possible for ordinary Nigerians, 27,000 of them, to own land in Abuja once they followed simple, but clear, procedures. Many more were to benefit from his supervision of the sale of government houses following the adoption of the monetisation policy by the Federal Government. El-Rufai became known as the successful manager of difficult tasks, but he handled it all with aplomb. He initiated the process of pension reforms that birthed

the new contributory pension scheme, led the planning team for a new national identity mechanism and coordinated the bureau of public service reforms. During his service as FCT minister, he invited and provided facilities for the EFCC to set up a unit in his ministry, in a firm demonstration of his commitment to transparency.

After nine years in public office, El-Rufai returned to school, completing a law degree and enrolling for a Master's in Public Administration at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Since his return to the country, he has been active as a vocal public intellectual and has maintained a popular weekly column. El-Rufai chaired the renewal committee of the CPC, and he was a signatory to the APC's INEC registration form that confirmed the merger of the five parties that fused into the APC. He was later appointed the interim deputy national secretary of the APC.

In April 2015, Malam Nasir Ahmad El-Rufai, was elected of Governor of Kaduna State on the platform of the APC. In that office, he has brought zeal, innovations and results to governance. Anchored on the Restoration Programme, the manifesto of the Kaduna APC, he is leading a team to remake governance in the state and align all priorities to the sustainable delivery of public goods. He has scored many firsts. Among other unique steps, he is the first to attach portfolios while sending his cabinet nominations for confirmation and is the first to implement the Treasury Single Account.

Under his leadership, Kaduna State has doubled its internally-generated revenues, attained unprecedented levels of capital spending and secured significant levels of foreign direct investment. In 2017, Malam EI-Rufai began implementing measures to reform the public service and improve standards in the education sector by disengaging 21,780 failed primary school teachers and recruiting 25,000 new teachers to replace them. He has established the Kaduna Geographic Information Service (KADGIS) as the new, digital land registry for the state, centralised revenue collection in a new Kaduna State Internal Revenue Service (KADIRS), through a new tax law, and placed pension management under one Pension Bureau. His government has completed and commissioned the 150m litres per day water treatment plant component of the Zaria Water project, and is retrofitting 12 waterworks across the state.

The EI-Rufai Government has prioritised infrastructure development. In mid-2017, it had 443km of township roads and 16 intercity roads with a distance of 414.8km at various stages of completion. There are many schools being rebuilt, while it is upgrading 255 hospitals to be equipped with tools for safer deliveries and management of infant and maternal wealth.

Malam Nasir EI-Rufai is a resolute champion of the equality of opportunity. He recently chaired the APC Committee on True Federalism which has recommended the devolution of powers, including policing and control of mineral resources, to the states.

Transforming Nigeria's Educational System: Looking Back and Looking Forward - The Experience of Kaduna State.

Text of lecture delivered by Malam Nasir El-Rufai, Governor of Kaduna State, as the 4th Distinguished Guest Lecture of the University of Medical Sciences, Ondo State, on Monday, 30th April 2018

Let me start with my profound apologies for once rescheduling this lecture, and then arriving late today. As they say in aviation, this is due to technical reasons (schedule conflict) and the late arrival of the operating aircraft. It is good to be here with my friend and brother, Governor Rotimi Akeredolu, SAN with whom I share a long history of solidarity, professional and political engagement.

It is a great privilege to be in this specialised University of Medical Sciences – a model that we are studying to replicate in Kaduna State by God's Grace in the event we are re-elected. We are also keen students of Ondo State's achievements not only tertiary education but in delivering primary health care to the poorest citizens and are shamelessly copying same in Kaduna State. I therefore thank the Pro-Chancellor, Council and management of UNIMED for inviting me.

Introduction

1. I was particularly delighted when I got the invitation to deliver the 4th distinguished Guest lecture of this university for two reasons. First, I am persuaded that the development prospects of any country are connected to how well educated its citizens are. Secondly, I also believe that fundamental reforms in education are crucial to guaranteeing equal opportunity for all citizens regardless of their economic or social status.

2. Education is a lever for social mobility, enabling people to rise above the circumstances of their birth and providing a basis for building a meritocratic society. We have begun implementing ambitious education reforms in Kaduna State and, as you all know, these reforms have very often been met with resistance or in some cases, misrepresentation and mischief.
3. Your invitation seemed to me to be another acknowledgement that the rest of Nigeria is watching closely how Kaduna State is pursuing the reforms in Education, and how we are overcoming the resistance of those who think that their privileges, perquisites and entitlements should come before the need to equip the next generation with the ability to compete in a world that is changing faster than we can comprehend. I will ground the Kaduna State Government's views on Education Reforms on the practical realities we met in Kaduna State, and what we are doing to change those realities from dreariness to a positive one for all our children.

The Context of Education in Nigeria

4. A word or two about the historical context of Education in Nigeria is appropriate to help build the pictured the evolution, deformation and challenges of Education in Nigeria. As I noted in an article I wrote that was published on the back-page of ThisDay and online by SaharaReporters and Nigeria Village Square on 29th July 2011, 'Why Education Cannot Wait', Nigeria has neither sustained the government investment in Education nor maintained standards. At independence, Nigeria's 56 million people had 15,703 primary schools with a total enrolment of about 2,912,618 pupils. We had 883

Secondary Schools, 2 Federal Government Colleges, 315 Teacher Training Colleges and 29 Technical/Vocational Schools - all with a total enrolment of 169,019 students. We had one university college at Ibadan. By the time we became a republic in 1963, we had 4 Polytechnics and 5 Universities with a total of 2,445 undergraduate students. Kaduna State alone today has about 2 million pupils in public primary schools, compared to the nearly 3 million that were attending primary school in the whole of Nigeria in 1960.

5. The then regional governments invested heavily in Education. At that time, Nigeria as a whole allocated and spent an average of 40 percent of her national budget on education (compared to 2 percent under some recent governments). The old Western Region under Chief Obafemi Awolowo's visionary leadership devoted 55% while the Northern Region under an equally committed leadership of Sir Ahmadu Bello earmarked about 46% of its budget on education.
6. Since the 1960s, the number of Nigerians in school has increased but the levels of investment and budgetary spending have not kept pace. The Universal Primary Education programme of the 1970s tried to manage the explosion in demand for schooling by expanding access to Teacher Training Colleges to train primary school teachers. Legislation on Universal Basic Education commits all state governments to deliver nine years of free basic education. Yet, there are still many children out of school in parts of our country.

7. But the reality is that despite the massive increase in the number of educational institutions at all levels, standards have fallen, and many employers have come to regard increased expenditure on training entry level staff to their own standards as another unavoidable cost of doing business in Nigeria.
8. But there is no reason why the dissonance between numbers and quality should persist. It is perverse that in Nigeria we have an inverse relationship between the number of people going to school and the quality of the product. If we desire progressive outcomes for all our people, we cannot allow this to persist. We must be able to educate every Nigerian to globally-competitive standards!
9. I will now begin a discussion of Education in Kaduna by quickly stating that Kaduna State is 12th overall in WAEC scores nationally, but number one among all the 19 northern states. Anyone familiar with the reality of Education in Nigeria will know that even first position nationally is precarious, not to mention twelfth. We have work to do to expand access to Education and to achieve vastly improved standards!

Our Governance agenda, or the things we hold dear

10. In 2014, we in the APC began campaigning for the responsibility to lead Kaduna State. We developed and presented to our people the Restoration Programme as the Kaduna State-specific iteration of the APC manifesto. After analysing the dismal state into which over one and half decades of misrule had plunged the state, we decided to inspire in our people a firm belief in a better future with the rallying cry to Let's Make Kaduna Great Again.

11. At the core of the Restoration Programme is the fundamental belief in equality of opportunity, that once given the basic tools by government, people can maximise their potentials to build the good life for themselves. As I noted in the preface to the manifesto,

The APC believes that every citizen has the right to live in dignity, to aspire to and attain a good life; that it is the duty of the government to organise society to enable every person to develop their talents and be educated and healthy enough to make the best choices for themselves.

12. Therefore, the development of human capital is number one of the five priority areas we identified in the Restoration Programme, and we promised to invest aggressively in Education, Health and Social Welfare.
13. The rationale for this policy choice is obvious. We recognise education as a fundamental component of human development. Education is an aspirational asset, a tool that sparks the curiosity to seek solutions. This curiosity and its resultant solutions are integral to providing the kind of answers we need for modern development. Perhaps, the most important of its many benefits is the opportunity for social mobility; how quality education enables the poor to move out of poverty by the sheer force of determination, application of knowledge and hard work.
14. And this assertion that Education enhances life chances is not some motivational balderdash. It is the lived reality of many of us who were nurtured in a different Nigeria. I started life in rural Daudawa as the son of a pensioner. After my father's death, I was moved to Kaduna where I

completed primary education at the Local Education Authority (LEA) Primary School, Kawo. In 1972, I proceeded to Barewa College, Zaria, for my secondary education. The foundation my teachers gave me in primary school was further reinforced in Barewa. The commitment of these teachers to knowledge and hard work nurtured the drive and study habits that enabled me study diligently in Ahmadu Bello University to earn a degree in Quantity Surveying.

15. It is a fact that I and many people of my generation would not have gone to school without the availability of free, public education. The quality of education we received then equipped us with the skills required to compete with our peers anywhere in the world. Having been so blessed to receive decent and mostly free public education, and to be given the opportunity to improve our status, do we not then have a moral burden to ensure that today's children enjoy what we got? Should today's parents have to pay through their noses to secure for their children decent education in private primary and secondary schools?
16. This is why the current Kaduna State Government is committed to improving the infrastructure and tools that make education more conducive for teacher and student, because a good foundation is crucial to any future learning process. And we are determined to make the necessary investments to attract and retain the best people in character, skill and learning to the teaching profession.

How we met Education in Kaduna State

17. During our campaign in the 2014-2015 election cycle, the APC drew the attention of the people of Kaduna State to the

poor condition of the over 4250 public primary schools in the state. Many lacked roofs, doors or windows. The absence of water and toilets made sanitation a tall dream in many of the schools. In some places, school was just some available open space. We argued then that our children deserved better, and we promised that we would make it happen, even if resource constraints impede the pace of change.

18. For the records, permit me to reproduce the exact commitments we detailed in our manifesto on Education:
“Our educational policies and programmes are aimed at eradicating illiteracy in Kaduna State, ensuring every child gets at least nine years of free basic education, improving infrastructure and tools, while attracting the best people in character and learning to the teaching profession.

The APC Kaduna Change Team will therefore:

- a. Fully implement and enforce the Universal Basic Education Act with specific emphasis on tuition-free, compulsory basic education for every child living in Kaduna State;
- b. Enhance the pay and reward system for teachers, training and improving their competence, along with vigorous inspection and enforcement of performance standards;
- c. Build and equip more libraries in schools and community centres with access to online educational and enlightenment materials throughout the state;
- d. Develop and promote effective use of innovative teaching methods and materials in primary and secondary schools, utilising the latest technologies and pedagogic tools;
- e. Expanding and improving education opportunities for the most vulnerable, hard-to-reach and disadvantaged children, especially girls.

- f. Facilitate retooling and skills transfer programmes for unemployed youths to make them self-employed or employable and productive citizens;
 - g. Ensure the full optimisation of the capacity of existing technical and commercial colleges, and expand where necessary;
 - h. Revive and expand all vocational centres for technical skills acquisition, including addressing the needs of the physically-challenged who require special education;
 - i. Guarantee that the existing senior secondary and tertiary institutions will receive the required attention to ensure that:
 - i. Funds meant for running schools go directly to the schools and the management boards that will be established for them
 - ii. Learning environments and quality of tutors are improved, while equipment and tools are provided to promote research, increase professionalism and raise the quality of graduates;
 - j. Enunciate conducive policies and regulatory framework that will strengthen existing private educational institutions in Kaduna State as well as encourage the establishment of new ones;
 - k. Undertake a situation assessment of the Kaduna State Scholarship Scheme with a view to increasing expenditure on Science and Technology programmes at masters and doctoral levels.
19. As soon as we won the elections, we set up a Transition Committee to work on a detailed roll-out of programmes for attaining our governance goals and fulfilling our campaign promises. In that transition period, we received a report from the Education Sector Support Programme in Nigeria (ESSPIN), a DFID programme, on the competency levels

- of our primary school teachers and pupils. The ESSPIN 2014 report, which made scary reading, revealed, among others, that:
- a. 83% of all teachers had a proficiency in Maths and literacy of below 25%.
 - b. Primary 2 Pupils had an average score of 14% in English and 27% in Maths
 - c. Primary 4 pupils had an average score of 13% in English and 17% in Numeracy
20. These were indicators that there was little difference in educational standards between the teachers and the pupils. In the course of the sectoral briefings to which we devoted our first week in office, we were told that at least 50% of our pupils sit on bare floors due to the lack of school furniture in the dilapidated classrooms we had observed while campaigning.
21. Therefore, we knew we had to address teaching standards and the learning environment if we were to make any progress towards achieving our policy goal of expanding access to decent education for the children of the poorest people in our state.

Confronting the Rot

22. As a government, the problems we had been complaining about in opposition became our responsibility to fix. In 2015, we declared a State of Emergency in Education, enabling us to accelerate procurement and payment procedures for education projects, and began a programme of renovation and rehabilitation of primary schools. This included providing roofs, doors, and windows, boreholes and toilets. Where urgently needed,

we built new classrooms. In addition, we began placing orders for school furniture, because in some places up to 90% of pupils (not the 50% the former government claimed) had no desks or chairs.

23. After spending about N6 billion fixing about ten percent of the primary schools, we did an evaluation that concluded that we needed to move towards rebuilding schools, not just renovating them. With a growing population, our primary schools needed to have more classrooms and offices for teachers. We therefore opted to begin to build schools on two or three floors, depending on the projected demand and availability of land. And we concluded that we would require system building technologies and significant sources of funding to rebuild the schools in the timeline we prefer.
24. We were convinced that we had to open up to the Federal Government and our development partners about the scale of the challenges we faced on the Education front. We compiled an album showing the sorry state of our schools, with statistics on teacher quality and pupil-teacher ratios. I shared the album with the Minister of Finance Kemi Adeosun and then our development partners, including the Abuja Office of the World Bank. This is what led to the discussions that culminated in the World Bank approving a concessionary “performance-for-results” facility of \$350 million for Kaduna State on 20th June 2017. This facility would have enabled us to take care of the physical infrastructure component of the Primary Education challenge, in addition to other investments that will transform the economy of Kaduna State. Alas, the enemies

of the talakawa of Kaduna State in the Nigerian Senate continue to be a stumbling block to accessing this facility.

25. But we remained keen about addressing the personnel side too. Without competent teachers, even the most glittering school is as lifeless as a graveyard. But great teachers can inspire their pupils even when conditions are not quite ideal! Government responded to the implications of the 2014 ESSPIN report by getting the National Open University of Nigeria to conduct a survey of teacher competence. We took further steps to address gaps by arranging training and retraining for the teachers, as follows during the 2016/2017 session:
 - a. 11,315 classroom teachers were trained in Literacy and Numeracy through SUBEB.
 - b. Another 3,733 teachers were trained in Reading Skills through the Global Partnership for Education.
 - c. UBEC trained 5,945 teachers in Pedagogy, Lesson Plans and use of Teachers' Guides
26. On 3rd June 2017, the Kaduna State Government conducted a competency test for primary school teachers. The test was organised and supervised by a committee which included the state chairman and secretary of the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) and representatives of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) as members.
27. This test assessed the literacy and numeracy levels of the teachers through a Primary Four equivalent test. The government considered that giving teachers a 75% pass threshold for a Primary Four test was an extremely

generous decision! But the results were disappointing! Only 11,591 teachers (33.9%) scored at least 75% in the test. Others fell within the following categories:

- a. 70 and 74%: 5,766 (16.9%)
- b. 60-69%: 8,759 (26.1%)
- c. 0-59%: 8,047 (23.58%)

28. We made the painful, but necessary, decision to disengage teachers that scored less than 75%. This was done in accordance with the terms of their employment. Government records indicated that concerns about the problem of teacher quality led the government of late Sir Patrick Yakowa in 2012 to dismiss about 4000 teachers found to have fake qualifications. That same year, the Yakowa government also gave a five-year window within which all unqualified teachers were to acquire the NCE, the minimum teaching qualification. This five-year window closed in 2017, and this is the reason for the timing of the Teacher Competency Test.
29. While it would have been more popular and politically expedient to retain these unqualified teachers, we chose not to perpetuate the unfortunate cycle of mediocrity. We decided that the future of the two million pupils in our public primary schools mattered above all other considerations. After all the expenses on teacher training, we asked those who said we should give the failed teachers more time whether it is fair to subject the future prospects of endless cohorts of our children to teachers who were not significantly better than their pupils. The future of how many more of our children should be sacrificed for political expediency? We decided that this must stop.

30. Despite the threats of organised labour, and the strike action that followed, we launched a programme to recruit 25,000 new teachers. More than 43,000 applied for teaching positions. After examinations, SUBEB arrived at a shortlist of 15,897 which was subjected to further face-to-face scrutiny and screening. I am happy to disclose that the first batch of 11,385 new teachers have completed their induction training and have now reported in the schools to which they were posted.

31. We intend to continue to recruit teachers until we meet the target of 25,000 new teachers to replace the 21,780 unqualified teachers that were disengaged. Processes for the second batch of teacher recruitment are about to begin. Our State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) already has over 19,000 new applications. We will take only those teachers that meet our standards.

How we are changing things for the better

32. Reforming Education is a multidimensional undertaking, aimed at producing young people who are knowledgeable, curious, creative and imaginative; young people with the ability to question and make things better, imbued with the necessary attribute of mind and the character to be productive and ethical. The teacher is at the core of Education, with the outcomes of the learning process so dependent on the teacher's knowledge, dedication and ability to inspire the students. There are also issues about the learning environment, the physical infrastructure, the curriculum and the instructional materials. And in a country where even teachers in public schools often place their own children in private schools, it is important to involve the communities in implementing and monitoring the reforms at

the local level. I will now proceed to describe the various anchors of our Education reform process:

Free Education

33. As soon as we came into office, we made basic education truly free in Kaduna State. By making primary and junior secondary education fully free, and outlawing the collection of hidden fees and levies, we are saving parents in Kaduna State about N3.4 billion every year since September 2015.

Empowering Teachers

34. The Kaduna State Government has taken several decisions to empower teachers, in recognition of their centrality to positive outcomes in Education. Fundamental to this is a rejection of the disparaging notion that teaching should be a profession of last resort, jobs for the hangers-on and thugs that helped certain politicians into power. For that is how persons with little or no education were employed as teachers. We are restoring the professional pride of the teacher in several ways.
- a. **Career Barriers:** In 2015, we removed the career barrier that prevented teachers from reaching Permanent Secretary grade (Grade Level 17). Teachers in Kaduna State can reach the highest pay grade in the public service without having to stop being classroom teachers, headmasters or principals.
 - b. **Salaries:** Our State Executive Council has taken a decision to pay teachers more than other public servants. This is in an effort to ensure that the profession and remuneration are attractive and competitive enough for the brightest candidates. While the framework for this increment is being worked out by the offices of the Head of Service, Accountant General and the Ministry of Finance, we have

made the decision to waive personal income taxes on teachers' current pay. What this ensures, is that teachers have more disposable income, even before the enhanced salary scale is implemented. This waiver of personal income taxes will kick in as our new teachers settle down.

- c. Training: We expect so much from our teachers. This imposes on the government a duty to provide the platform for the teachers to continuously update their knowledge and teaching skills. Such a platform also makes it possible to engage in regular assessments of the gaps in teaching competence and to respond promptly with the appropriate training package. Through continuous training, teaching capacity will be enhanced and there may be no need in the future for the drastic action of removing failed teachers because they will not exist. The Kaduna State University has complied with the government directive to establish an Institute of Education to handle this vital function.
- d. Teachers' Welfare: Apart from salary issues, we have taken the decision to provide housing for teachers deployed in rural areas. This is a long-term undertaking to remove one of the major reasons why teachers shun postings to hard-to-reach areas. The designs for these teachers' quarters are ready. We also recently issued free motorbikes to some rural head-teachers to ease transportation.
- e. Upgrading the Entry criteria: We must raise the intellectual level of our teachers. We recognise that the Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE) is the current minimum teaching qualification. One of our goals is to ultimately have only graduates as primary school teachers. We strongly believe that the NCE should give way eventually to first and

second degrees as minimum teaching qualifications in our public schools.

- f. Continuous recruitment: We need to improve pupil-teacher ratios, and this implies continuous recruitment of teachers, to ensure that retirements or resignations do not create gaps that prevent pupils from getting the necessary tuition.
 - g. Volunteer Teacher Scheme: One of the key lessons we have learnt from our current reform efforts is that as long as you implement reforms in the best interest of the people, you will get public support once the reforms are explained and understood. As a consequence of our reforms and the increased awareness of their potential benefit to our pupils and students, we have received unsolicited offers from citizens to serve as volunteer teachers. We are grateful for this expression of civic enthusiasm. Government is currently working out a mechanism to properly engage interested persons in the volunteer teachers' scheme.
35. Physical Infrastructure: We shall continue to improve the learning environment, rebuild and expand schools, construct teachers' quarters in rural schools, provide school furniture and sanitation services, especially water and toilets. This is no small matter as the case of one primary school in the Rigasa Ward that has some 26,000 pupils illustrates. We have had to erect tents as a temporary measure while we are building multi-storey schools to accommodate the pupils.
36. Technology in learning
- a. We are piloting the use of computer tablets for instruction in some of our secondary schools. We have distributed

15,000 tablets to students. The ExxonMobil/NNPC Joint Venture kindly donated 5,000 of these. The State has provided training on ICT usage to the teachers in these schools and we have provided laptops to those certified. The ultimate aim of this is to test the effectiveness of technology as a learning tool in these select schools, and then scale up to additional schools if the outcome reflects a superior performance in the pilot schools.

- b. Whiteboards are steadily replacing blackboards in our primary and secondary schools.
37. **School Feeding:** The government has enhanced the quality of feeding in boarding secondary schools. The feeding of the students is also being outsourced to private caterers. Our state was also the first to begin the school-feeding programme promised in the APC manifesto. Under that programme, we fed 1.5m primary school pupils every school day. The Federal Government has now taken over a significant component of this under the Social Investment Programme.
38. **Provision of School Uniforms:** The government further provided free uniforms to secondary school students as a further step to alleviate the burden on parents and reduce the barriers or excuses for keeping children out of school.

Fostering Ownership of the Public Education Process

39. **School-based Management Committees (SBMCs) and Boards:** Our government has enacted a law establishing Management Boards and School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in each of our nearly 5000 schools.

The purpose of this law is to ensure community involvement in school governance and improve accountability in how the budget for each school is spent.

40. Compulsory enrolment of children of Public Servants to Public Schools: We are determined to fix public education and raise the standards; such that private education will become only a luxury and not a necessity for proper education. As we make progress in implementing this, we will require our senior officials to enrol their children in public schools; this gives them a stake in ensuring that the process continues to be effective and qualitative. I have already made the pledge to enrol my eligible son in a public school when he turns six in 2019.
41. Preparing the children of today for the future: As noted earlier, the world is changing at an unprecedented pace. Technology is disrupting old certainties and opening new vistas. Nigeria has to embrace the challenge of preparing our children for this new world. Our curriculum must evolve, and our pedagogy must begin to prioritise teaching children to think. We must banish cramming and rote-learning and encourage everyone to put knowledge as the goal of education, not certificates. So much energy is put into acquiring certificates that so little knowledge actually seeps in!
42. The impact of ICT in learning is broadening by the day. Many are the subjects now available online from reputable sources, like Khan Academy that teaches Mathematics. The acceleration of these ICT learning platforms may soon mean many properly networked environments might not need brick and mortar schools, except for reasons of

socialising the students into community ethos and building relationships amongst them.

43. In addition to acknowledging ICT, we should consider whether instruction in our local languages might be helpful in attaining better learning outcomes at any stage of Education. The Russians, the Japanese and the Chinese have not needed English to master technology or send persons into space.
44. In this regard, our National Policy on Education drafted in the 1970s and introduced in the 1980s is overdue for holistic review. Kaduna State is already working on its own educational policy for the 21st Century.

Conclusion

45. The reason for all our actions are the nearly 2 million pupils in public primary schools in Kaduna State, who are mostly children of the poor, and who constitute the future generations of our state. To equip them with the requisite skills and knowledge to build a better future and compete nationally and globally, we must ensure that they have the best educational foundation. If there is one thing I wish to strongly underline in this lecture, let it be that 'investing in young people today means we are transforming our societies for tomorrow'. This is what we are striving for in Kaduna State and we know that with our current reforms and the support we are getting from within the state, Nigeria and abroad, we will achieve this.
46. Making the Investment in Human Capital: The Education budget in Kaduna State under our watch has averaged 31-35% from 2016, way above the UN minimum of 26%.

Although, we have raised enrolment in public primary schools from 1.1m in July 2015 to about 2m by September 2017, we have a long way to go to complete the upgrade of schools and other actions. But at least, we know there is a problem in Education, and we have the courage to do something about it.

47. There is no point concealing a sore when transparency would help you cure it and prevent a future cancer. That is why we had no problem sharing the album of our dilapidated schools with the Federal Ministry of Finance and the World Bank so that the scale of the problem could be appreciated. Some newspapers make a regular sport of publishing front-page pictures of our school children sitting on floors. But it is a problem that we inherited and have openly acknowledged since 2015, and the point is that we are doing something about it! A problem that was born and festered for 16 years cannot be totally solved in three years! I must at this point acknowledge the strong editorial support many in the media have given to our tough decisions to reform Education.

48. And we would not be deterred by the predictable resistance to our Education Reforms. The labour unions thought they could browbeat us into retaining unqualified teachers, but they discovered that there was no public support for their position. Their strike action collapsed because the parents in Kaduna State rejected the union notion that the children of the poor deserved unqualified teachers. Despite this public rebuff to their claims, some trade unionists and their political allies are still threatening us with electoral consequences come 2019.

49. Electoral calculations cannot be allowed to determine weighty issues like Education. But we know that the people of Kaduna State did not elect us to retain the practices and people that have held the state back for 16 years. Elections are for people to decide, and we trust that the people of Kaduna State will make the best judgment for themselves and their children.

50. Permit me to close by restating our governance mission. Our primary purpose in government is to create equal opportunity and give every child the best prospects through decent education; to provide employment opportunities for our young people alongside instituting a vibrant economy, regulated by a competent public service; to prevent pregnancy from being a death sentence for mother and child and to empower our people to be sufficiently knowledgeable and confident enough to maximise their talents. Governance must empower people, not deepen dependence or surrender on necessary policies just because the entrenched and entitled elite oppose it.

Thank you for listening.

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Governor of Kaduna State

Ondo, Ondo State

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