

Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF

Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office

The Context

The militant group, Boko Haram, has carried out violent attacks in the northern parts of Nigeria. Thousands of Nigerians have been killed and many more have been forced to flee their homes.

Schools have been the primary target of the attacks. Since 2011, Boko Haram, whose name means “Western Education is forbidden”, has expanded its attacks to the direct target of schools, resulting in the killing and abduction of hundreds of teachers and students and the destruction of school buildings and teaching materials.

The recent kidnapping of over 200 Nigerian girls and the frequent and violent attacks of terror against girls and boys have generated a call for the International Community.

It is useful to situate this within the context of education in Nigeria:

- Almost one of three primary school age children is out of school, and roughly one of four junior secondary age children is out of school¹.
- Nearly 6.3 million, or 60 per cent, of the 10.5 million Nigerian out of school children live in the northern Nigeria.
- Huge geographical disparities exist; the percentage of children out of school in the Northeast is 30 times greater than the percentage in the Southeast². 60% of the out-of school children are girls from Northern Nigeria.

There is an urgent need for protection so that education can continue. The Nigerian government should ensure that the right to education without discrimination becomes a reality for all Nigerians.

The “Safe School Initiative”

The abductions of the more than 200 girls from Chibok have touched a nerve, evidenced by social media initiatives like “Bring Back Our Girls.” The effect of such attacks has dampened participation in education. In an area where participation rates for girls are some of the lowest in Nigeria, families across the northeast are staying away from schools.

As a response to this situation the **“Safe Schools Initiative” was launched by the UN Special Envoy for Global Education, Gordon Brown, alongside Nigerian Global Business Coalition for Education and private sector leaders at the World Economic Forum Africa.**

The “Safe School Initiative” entails a combination of **(1) school-based interventions; (2) community interventions to protect schools; and (3) special measures for at-risk populations.** The initiative could be implemented in Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states, already in a declared state of emergency, and expanded to others in the north and, as a national initiative, to cover the entire country.

The Safe Schools Fund: The Government of Nigeria launched the Safe Schools Fund as an initial response³ with a contribution from the Federal Government of US\$10 Million and another US\$10 Million pledge from the Private Sector. The Safe Schools Fund is managed by the Ministry of Finance. This national Fund will be complemented by the establishment of the **Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF)** for **UN support, co-financing and implementation** of activities pertaining to the Initiative.

¹ See: <http://www.aworldatschool.org/news/entry/report-the-safe-schools-initiative>

² See Learning for All: Nigeria at - See more at: http://educationenvoy.org/countries_issues/nigeria/#sthash.bv6d55ut.dpuf

³ For more information see <http://www.aworldatschool.org/pages/the-safe-schools-fund>

Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF

Building on the comparative advantages of the specialized UN Agencies, Funds and Programmes, and to complement efforts from the national Safe School Fund implemented by the Federal Government of Nigeria. The Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF will channel donor contributions from traditional donors as well as emerging partners for UN implementation of complementary activities supporting the government's safe schools initiative agenda. The Fund will be established with the initial lifespan of 3 years.

In close coordination and complementarity with the national Fund, the Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF will be a rapid and flexible financial mechanism to disburse co-financing to the participating UN Organizations and their implementing partners, be it national or international NGOs, private sector partners and community-based organizations (CBOs) in the Northeast of Nigeria.

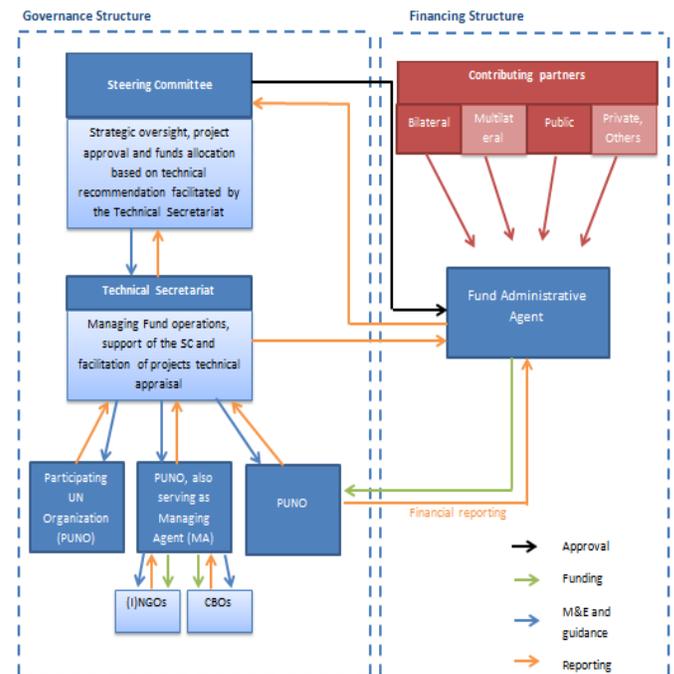
To operationalize the Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF, a set of guidelines and terms for community and organization access to the Safe Schools Initiative funding will be set up, requiring that schools demonstrate they are able to provide the minimum conditions to promote learning, inclusion, stimulation and a friendly environment to sustain children students, teachers, school personnel, etc. Projects funded by the Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF will aim to build resilience and promote vigilance and awareness of threats.

Notably, the Fund will enable the rapid disbursement and implementation of activities in the areas which are of most difficult access in the Northeast. In order to **encourage the complementarity** between the national Fund and the Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF, **the latter could include as a guiding principle for project and funding approval, that the proposed project is receiving or will receive co-financing from the national Fund.**

The Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF will benefit from a set of established standard operating procedures for Fund administration and Fund management in line with international best practices. It will also benefit from UN agreed and harmonized recovery rates, pre-agreed contribution agreements with partners, and publicly available programmatic and financial information through an online platform, the MPTF Office GATEWAY <http://mptf.undp.org/>.

The Fund's structure

In line with common practices for UN country-based multi-donor trust funds, the Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF will be governed by a Steering Committee, which will be supported by a Technical Secretariat. UN Organizations will be eligible for funding, as well as NGOs, Civil Society Organizations, private sector partners and CBOs, which could access the Fund through one Participating UN Organization assuming the role of Managing Agent. The Fund governance will aim to mobilize development assistance from traditional and non-traditional partners by providing an accountable, transparent, result-oriented and cost-effective financial instrument.



To avoid duplication and enhance synergies between the national Fund and the Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF, the already established **Steering Committee (SC)** of the national Fund will also serve as SC of the Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF. The SC responsibilities will be to oversee the allocation of mobilized funds, discuss the Fund requirements and priorities and to provide oversight and overall guidance on the Fund's impact and achievement of results.

In addition to providing administrative support to the SC for fund operations, the **Fund's secretariat** will fulfil a technical function and provide programmatic support. The main secretariat functions include preparing operational manuals with rules of procedures, facilitating SC meetings, managing project proposal submission and review process using standard technical and impartial reviews (e.g. double-blind assessment of proposals), monitoring projects and coordinating evaluations, and overseeing and managing public communications. The secretariat also coordinates with the fund's administrative agent to produce and distribute narrative and financial reports. Efforts will be made to keep the costs of the Fund Governance Architecture (SC and secretariat) to a maximum of 3% of the Fund.

The Fund will comprise a wide range of implementing entities, including **Participating UN Organizations (PUNOs)** which may also partner with various national, international, non-governmental and private organizations to execute specific project activities. The PUNOs receive financial resources directly from the Fund through its administrative agent and manage them to carry out a range of agreed activities designed to achieve the Fund's planned results. For projects directly approved for NGO implementation, one of the PUNOs may be appointed as **Managing Agent (MA)** to transfer funds to NGOs while retaining programmatic and financial control and accountability vis-à-vis the Fund and its contributing partners.

The **Multi-Partner Trust Fund Office (MPTF Office)** will serve as the **Administrative Agent (AA)** of the Nigeria Safe Schools Initiative MDTF. AA functions include:

- Fund establishment: Support Fund design (governance structure and financial architecture), development of legal instruments and logical and results framework based on the fund's theory of change;
- Fund administration: Receive contributions, administers funds received, disburse funds to participating organizations in accordance with instructions from the SC and consolidating financial and programme reports including final reports and fund closure;
- Advisory services: provide advisory services, upon request, to enable rapid and efficient fund initiation and operations.

Transparency and access to information

The MPTF Office GATEWAY (<http://mptf.undp.org/>) is a web-based service portal, which provides real-time financial data generated directly from UNDP's accounting system. It is a first of its kind in the UN to provide real-time financial information to the public. Partners are now able to track information on contributions, transfers and expenditures.



The MPTF Office GATEWAY (<http://mptf.undp.org/>) supports a **Results Based Management** system. The Fund architecture design is set up to mirror the result areas. The RBM system captures performance data at the outcome and output level. It links programmatic and financial performance indicators, allowing an assessment of both the Fund's efficiency and effectiveness. This data can in turn inform a better **performance based allocation** of funding and serve as a tool to complement M&E efforts.

