

# SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION

## IN AFRICA

Vol. 2



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**BOOK CHAPTER**

# SUSTAINABLE EDUCATION IN AFRICA

Peer Reviewed Book Chapter

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# 3

## ADEQUATE FUNDING AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

By

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### Abstract

Adequate funding is a critical factor in the successful development of inclusive education in Nigeria. Inclusive education ensures that all learners, including those with disabilities, marginalized groups, and disadvantaged backgrounds, have equitable access to quality learning opportunities. Despite policy frameworks supporting inclusive education, inadequate financial resources have hindered effective implementation, resulting in limited access, poor learning outcomes, and inequities in educational participation. This chapter examines the importance of adequate funding for inclusive education in Nigeria, highlighting its impact on access, teaching



quality, equity, specialized programs, monitoring and evaluation, and community engagement. The discussion underscores that strategic financial investment is essential for overcoming systemic barriers, enhancing educational outcomes, and promoting social inclusion. The chapter concludes with recommendations for policy makers, educators, and stakeholders to prioritize funding, capacity building and resource optimization to ensure sustainable inclusive education development in Nigeria.

### **3.0. Introduction**

Education is widely recognized as a cornerstone for national development, social equity, and economic growth. In Nigeria, the government and other stakeholders have made various efforts to provide accessible and quality education for all citizens. However, the realization of inclusive education a system that accommodates the diverse learning needs of every child, including those with disabilities, marginalized groups, and learners from disadvantaged backgrounds remains a significant challenge. A critical factor influencing the success of inclusive education is adequate funding, which determines the availability of infrastructure, teaching and learning resources, teacher training, and support services necessary to meet the needs of all learners.

Inclusive education emphasizes the right of every child to participate in learning without discrimination or exclusion, promoting equity and social cohesion. Achieving this in Nigeria requires more than policy statements; it demands sufficient financial investment to build accessible schools, provide assistive technologies, train specialized educators, and develop curricula that respond to diverse learning needs. Despite the adoption of inclusive education policies and commitments under international frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4—Quality Education for All), inadequate funding has constrained the effective implementation of these policies, leaving many learners underserved.

Adequate funding in the context of inclusive education extends beyond mere budget allocation; it involves strategic investment in human, material, and technological resources to ensure that schools and learning environments are capable of supporting all learners. Funding impacts the recruitment and training of special education teachers, the provision of learning materials tailored for students with disabilities, the adaptation of classrooms and facilities for accessibility, and the establishment of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track educational outcomes. In Nigeria, persistent challenges such as limited government budgetary allocation to education, corruption, and mismanagement of funds further complicate the achievement of inclusive education goals.



This chapter explores the nexus between adequate funding and inclusive education development in Nigeria. It examines how financial investment influences the quality, accessibility, and equity of education, highlights the challenges that hinder effective funding, and discusses strategies for optimizing resources to ensure that inclusive education policies translate into meaningful learning opportunities for all. By focusing on the critical role of funding, the chapter seeks to provide insights into how Nigeria can move closer to achieving an equitable and inclusive education system that empowers every learner and supports national development.

### 3.1. Conceptual Terms

- **Concept of Inclusive Education**

Inclusive education is an educational approach that aims to provide equitable and quality learning opportunities for all students, regardless of their diverse backgrounds and abilities, by identifying and removing barriers to education and fostering full participation in learning environments (UNESCO, N.D). Inclusive education is a process that ensures the presence, participation and achievement of all learners by adapting education policies, practices, and environments to respect and address diversity so that every learner can reach their full potential (INEE.2024). Inclusive education is a continuous process of change and improvement within education systems to make learning more welcoming, equitable, and effective for a wide range of students, including those facing barriers due to disability, culture, language, or socio-economic background. European School Education Platform. (2025) defined inclusive education is a system that responds to the different needs of learners by increasing their participation in education, culture, and society and by reducing discrimination within the education system so that all students can access learning together.

- **Concept of Adequate Funding**

Adequate funding is a crucial aspect in the success of any academic research project. It refers to the appropriate and sufficient amount of financial resources needed to carry out a research study. Adequate funding ensures that researchers have the necessary resources to conduct their experiments, collect data, and analyze results. It also allows for the implementation of new technologies and techniques that can improve the quality and accuracy of research findings. Adequate funding refers to the provision of sufficient financial resources to meet the specific needs of an organization, institution, or programme. In the context of education, adequate funding ensures that schools have enough money to support all aspects of teaching and learning, including the acquisition of instructional materials, teacher salaries, professional development, infrastructure, and technological tools. Adequate funding is essential for the effective



implementation of educational programmes because it enables schools to maintain a conducive learning environment, improve teacher competency, provide learning resources, and support innovative teaching methods. Without adequate funding, schools may face shortages of textbooks, instructional materials, classrooms, and teaching personnel, all of which negatively impact students' academic performance and overall educational quality (Unachukwu, 2026). Adequate funding also includes other forms of support such as access to equipment, facilities, and personnel. These resources are essential for the smooth running of a research project and can greatly impact the overall success of the study. Without adequate funding, researchers may face limitations in their work. This could lead to incomplete or inconclusive results, hindering the progress of scientific knowledge and advancements. It could also lead to delays in research projects and may even result in the termination of studies due to lack of resources.

Adequate funding is critical for the development of any public institution. Adequate funding is the key to the achievement of the institution's goals. Adequate funding is the life wire of any organization. No meaningful impact institutions can attain without adequate funding (Ogunode, Ukozor, & Ayoko, (2023) and Ayuba, (2015). Adequate fund refers to sufficient funds available for execution of a project or programmes. "Funding for education remains one of the important resources that are needed to manage the school system. All levels of education; primary, secondary and tertiary require a sufficient level of funding to improve the standard of education provided in the country. When funding is not provided in the right quantity and at the right time, it affects the education sector in so many ways (Nwafor, Uchendu, & Akani, 2015). Adequate fund is the provision of an excess money for the implementation of programmes. Adequate fund is the financial allocation above a minimum bench mark for implementation of a programme. Projects or programme are adequately funded when financial provision for the projects or programme is above the budget or equal to the planned budget. Adequate Funding is the act or process of continuous providing sufficient capital for the implementation of the project or programme" (Ogunode & Mohammed, 2023).

### **3.3. Benefits of Adequately Funding Inclusive Education in Nigeria**

Adequate funding is a critical determinant of the effectiveness and sustainability of inclusive education in Nigeria. Inclusive education seeks to ensure that all learners regardless of disability, socio-economic background, gender, or geographic location have equitable access to quality learning. When appropriately funded, inclusive education can yield multiple benefits, which are discussed below.



**i. Improved Access to Education for All Learners**

The adequate funding of inclusive education can significantly improve access to education for all learners. With proper financial resources, inclusive education programs can expand their reach and offer a wider range of courses and resources to learners of all ages and backgrounds. This will not only increase the accessibility of education for learners, but also create more opportunities for learners with different learning styles and needs (Ogunode, Ukozor, & Ayoko, 2023a). Adequate funding can also lead to the development of new educational technologies and methodologies that can enhance the learning experience for special learners. Adequate funding ensures that learning environments are accessible to all students, including those with disabilities or special needs. Resources from sufficient budgets can be used to construct accessible classrooms, ramps, toilets, and other facilities tailored for differently-abled learners. Financial support enables the provision of assistive technologies such as hearing aids, braille materials, and screen readers. In Nigeria, where many rural and marginalized communities face barriers to education, funding inclusive education ensures that students who would otherwise be excluded are provided with opportunities to attend school, participate actively, and achieve their potential. This increased access aligns with national policies and international commitments, such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4), which advocate quality education for all (UNESCO, 2017).

**ii. Enhanced Quality of Teaching and Learning**

The adequate funding of inclusive education has been shown to greatly enhance the quality of teaching and learning. This is due to the fact that with proper funding, adult educators are able to access the necessary resources and materials needed to create a more dynamic and effective learning environment (Ogunode, Ukozor, & Ayoko, 2023a). Adequate funding also allows for the implementation of new teaching methods and technologies, as well as the hiring of highly qualified instructors. Adequate funding facilitates the recruitment and professional development of teachers who are trained in inclusive education methodologies. Teachers trained in special education, differentiated instruction, and adaptive teaching strategies can better support learners with diverse needs (Funaab 2025). In addition, funding allows for the acquisition of high-quality teaching and learning materials, including textbooks, learning aids, and multimedia resources that cater to a wide range of learners. When educators are well-equipped and supported, learning outcomes improve across the board, fostering equity and effectiveness in education delivery (World Bank, 2020).



### iii. **Promotion of Equity and Social Inclusion**

Adequate funding of adult education has been shown to be essential in promoting equity and social inclusion. Through increasing access to quality education, individuals from marginalized communities are able to acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to compete in the job market and contribute to the development of their communities (EENET. 2018). Investing in inclusive education allows for the recognition and empowerment of diverse perspectives and identities, leading to a more inclusive and equitable society (Ogunode, Olaoye, & Yakubu, 2023). Adequate funding of inclusive education is crucial in breaking down barriers to education and providing opportunities for individuals to reach their full potential, regardless of their background or socioeconomic status. Investment in inclusive education demonstrates a societal commitment to equity, diversity, and human rights. Adequate funding ensures that marginalized groups including girls, children with disabilities, and learners from low-income families receive the attention and support they need to succeed academically (Ogunode, Hauwa, & Muhammad, 2023).. Financial resources enable initiatives such as scholarships, school feeding programs, and transportation services that reduce the barriers preventing disadvantaged learners from attending school. By addressing these systemic inequalities, Nigeria can promote social inclusion, reduce educational disparities, and foster cohesion among different societal groups (UNICEF, 2019).

### iv. **Development of Specialized Educational Programs**

The provision of adequate funding for inclusive education has been shown to have a significant impact on the development of specialized educational programs. By investing in adult education, individuals are given the opportunity to acquire relevant skills and knowledge that are crucial in the development of specialized programs. With the necessary funding, these programs will have the resources to hire qualified instructors and provide students with the necessary materials and equipment for effective learning (Ogunode, et al 2023). This will not only enhance the quality of education but also attract more individuals to pursue higher education in specialized fields. Inclusive education often requires curriculum adaptation to meet the diverse needs of learners. Adequate funding allows for the development and implementation of specialized programs such as life skills education, vocational training for learners with disabilities, and remedial literacy and numeracy programs. Such programs equip learners with practical skills for independent living and economic self-sufficiency. In Nigeria, where unemployment and poverty remain significant challenges, funded inclusive education programs can directly contribute to human capital development and socio-economic empowerment (Federal Ministry of Education, 2021).



v. **Improved Monitoring, Evaluation, and Policy Implementation**

The adequate funding of adult education is crucial for improved monitoring, evaluation, and policy implementation. With proper funding, programs and resources can be developed and implemented to address the needs of adult learners (Ogunode, Olaoye & Yakubu, 2023). This can lead to more effective monitoring and evaluation of adult education initiatives, as well as better policy implementation to support the success of these programs. Adequate funding can also allow for the development of innovative teaching methods and materials, as well as the training of qualified instructors. Financial support allows education authorities to implement robust monitoring and evaluation systems for inclusive education programs (Unachukwu, 2026). Adequate funding ensures that schools can track enrollment, attendance, learning outcomes, and the effectiveness of support interventions. Through data-driven insights, policymakers can identify gaps, allocate resources efficiently, and make informed decisions about expanding or improving inclusive education programs. This evidence-based approach ensures accountability and increases the likelihood of sustainable, long-term improvements in Nigeria's education sector (UNESCO, 2017).

vi. **Encouragement of Community and Stakeholder Engagement**

The adequate funding of inclusive education is crucial for the encouragement and promotion of community and stakeholder engagement. With proper financial support, adult education programs can provide individuals with the necessary knowledge and skills to actively participate in their communities and engage with various stakeholders. This will ultimately lead to a more informed and involved society, promoting collaboration and cooperation among individuals and groups. Through adequate funding, inclusive education programs can offer a wide range of courses and resources tailored to the needs and interests of the community. This can include topics such as community development, civic education, and communication skills, which are vital for fostering engagement and collaboration (Nwafor, Uchendu, & Akani, 2015). Funding can also support the development of innovative teaching methods and materials, making the learning experience more appealing and effective for adult learners. With sufficient funding, inclusive education programs can reach a larger audience and target specific communities or groups that may face barriers to education, such as low-income individuals or immigrants. This will ensure that all members of the community have equal access to education and can actively contribute to their respective communities. When inclusive education is adequately funded, it signals to communities and stakeholders that the government values education for all (European School Education Platform, 2025). Financial investment allows schools to implement outreach programs, parent engagement initiatives, and community-based learning support services. In Nigeria, such



engagement is critical to overcoming cultural barriers, stigma, and misconceptions surrounding disability and inclusion. Well-funded programs help build partnerships with NGOs, civil society organizations, and local communities, fostering a supportive environment that encourages learner participation and retention (EENET, 2018).

#### 4.0 Conclusion and Suggestions

Adequate funding plays a pivotal role in realizing the goals of inclusive education in Nigeria. Proper investment ensures that educational facilities are accessible, teaching and learning resources are available, and educators are trained to meet diverse learner needs. Financial support also promotes equity, reduces disparities, facilitates specialized programs, enables effective monitoring and evaluation, and encourages community participation in education. Conversely, inadequate funding has been a major barrier to the effective implementation of inclusive education policies, limiting access for marginalized learners and undermining educational quality. Therefore, ensuring sufficient and strategic funding is indispensable for achieving inclusive education that empowers all learners, fosters social equity, and contributes to national development.

Based on the analysis of the benefits of adequately funding inclusive education in Nigeria, the following suggestions are proposed:

**Increase Government Budget Allocation to Education:** The federal and state governments should allocate sufficient funds to inclusive education programs, prioritizing infrastructure, learning materials, and teacher training.

**Develop Specialized Training Programs for Educators:** Teachers should receive regular training in inclusive education strategies, adaptive teaching, and the use of assistive technologies to support diverse learners effectively.

**Provide Assistive Technologies and Learning Resources:** Financial investment should ensure the availability of learning aids, braille materials, digital tools, and other resources to accommodate learners with disabilities and special needs.

**Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:** Adequate funding should support data collection, program evaluation, and evidence-based policy adjustments to ensure inclusive education programs achieve their intended outcomes.



**Promote Community and Stakeholder Engagement:** Resources should be allocated to outreach programs, parent education, and partnerships with NGOs to build awareness, reduce stigma, and foster a supportive environment for inclusive learning.

**Encourage Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborations with private sector organizations and civil society can supplement government funding and expand the reach and effectiveness of inclusive education initiatives.

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### Concluding Synthesis

The second edition of *Sustainable Education in Africa* advances the discourse on educational transformation by offering a deeper, more nuanced interrogation of the structural, technological, and socio-economic forces shaping education systems across Nigeria and the African continent. Building upon the foundations established in the first edition, this volume expands its analytical scope to incorporate emerging paradigms such as digital ecosystems, artificial intelligence–driven educational planning, climate-responsive education, and the evolving nexus between education, economic resilience, and sustainable development.

A cross-chapter synthesis reveals that sustainable education in Africa is no longer a singular policy objective but a dynamic, multi-layered process requiring systemic alignment across governance, infrastructure, pedagogy, and innovation ecosystems. The contributions collectively underscore that while technological advancements—particularly in digital learning platforms, data analytics, and artificial intelligence—offer unprecedented opportunities to enhance access, efficiency, and quality, their transformative potential remains contingent upon enabling environments characterized by robust infrastructure, policy coherence, institutional capacity, and equitable resource distribution.

The volume further highlights the persistence of entrenched structural challenges, including chronic underfunding, socio-economic inequalities, policy inconsistencies, insecurity, and weak institutional frameworks. These constraints continue to limit the scalability and sustainability of educational reforms. Notably, the second edition places greater emphasis on the interconnectedness of these challenges, illustrating how deficits in governance, economic stability, and social inclusion directly impact educational outcomes.

Importantly, this edition reframes education as a strategic driver of national competitiveness, innovation, and social cohesion within a rapidly changing global landscape. It reinforces the imperative for education systems to move beyond traditional models toward adaptive, inclusive, and future-oriented frameworks that are responsive to both global trends and localized realities.

Ultimately, this volume contributes to advancing scholarly and policy-oriented conversations by offering integrated insights that bridge theory, practice, and innovation. It serves as a critical resource for stakeholders seeking to navigate the complexities of educational transformation while fostering systems that are resilient, inclusive, and aligned with sustainable development imperatives.

### **Implications for Practice**

Drawing from the expanded insights of this second edition, the following strategic implications are proposed for policymakers, educational leaders, practitioners, and development partners:

#### **Policy Innovation and Systems Thinking:**

Governments should adopt adaptive, data-driven policy frameworks that integrate sustainability, digital transformation, and inclusivity into long-term national development strategies. Emphasis should be placed on policy continuity, monitoring mechanisms, and cross-sectoral coordination.

#### **Digital Transformation and Emerging Technologies:**

There is an urgent need to scale investments in digital infrastructure, artificial intelligence applications, and smart learning environments. Educational systems must harness technology not only for access but also for personalized learning, predictive planning, and administrative efficiency.

#### **Sustainable Financing Models:**

Beyond traditional funding mechanisms, innovative financing approaches—including public-private partnerships, education bonds, and international development funding—should be explored to ensure long-term sustainability and resilience of education systems.

#### **Capacity Development for the Future Workforce:**

Continuous professional development must evolve to include digital competencies, interdisciplinary teaching approaches, and innovation-driven pedagogy. Educators should be equipped to prepare learners for emerging global labor markets.

#### **Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice:**

Policies and interventions must go beyond access to address systemic inequalities affecting marginalized groups, including gender disparities, rural-urban divides, and learners with special needs. Inclusive education should be embedded as a core principle rather than a peripheral objective.

#### **Research, Data, and Evidence-Based Practice:**

Institutions should strengthen research capacity and promote the use of real-time data analytics to inform decision-making, policy formulation, and educational innovation.

#### **Strengthening Institutional Resilience:**

Education systems must be designed to withstand disruptions such as economic shocks, pandemics, and conflicts by incorporating flexible delivery models, blended learning systems, and crisis-responsive policies.

### **Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration:**

Sustainable transformation requires coordinated engagement among governments, academia, industry, civil society, and international organizations to leverage expertise, resources, and innovation.

### Editors' Note

The editors are pleased to present the second edition of *Sustainable Education in Africa*, which reflects an expanded and enriched body of knowledge responding to the evolving complexities of education systems within the continent.

We extend our sincere appreciation to the contributing authors whose scholarly contributions demonstrate exceptional rigor, depth, and forward-thinking perspectives. Their work not only builds upon the foundations of the first edition but also introduces new dimensions that address contemporary challenges and emerging opportunities in education.

We also acknowledge the invaluable role of peer reviewers, editorial board members, and institutional collaborators whose commitment to academic excellence has ensured the credibility, relevance, and quality of this publication. Their contributions have been instrumental in shaping this volume into a comprehensive and impactful resource.

This second edition is conceived as more than an academic compilation; it is a strategic platform for advancing dialogue, informing policy, and inspiring innovation in education across Africa. It reflects our collective commitment to fostering educational systems that are inclusive, resilient, and aligned with sustainable development goals.

It is our expectation that this volume will serve as a catalyst for further research, interdisciplinary collaboration, and transformative action, ultimately contributing to the continuous evolution of education systems across the continent.