

WORKING PAPER

ERICC RESEARCH AGENDA FOR NIGERIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Nigeria research agenda outlines the research direction based on the co-construction of evidence and sets out the co-creative principles for implementing the research agenda. The research themes that constitute the Nigeria research agenda were identified through consultations with key in-country stakeholders at the Federal level and in Borno, Adamawa, and Kaduna States.

The stakeholders identified the priority research concerns around access, quality, continuity and coherence of education in conflict and crisis-affected contexts in Nigeria as the following, in sequence to be addressed: (1) policy, systems and sustainability; (2) teacher issues; (3) data; and (4) social and emotional learning. The stakeholder concerns were cross-checked with the literature for gaps in evidence. The research problems were then proposed as knowledge gaps where the concerns had not been addressed in the literature, where the research problems were the broad articulation of the stakeholder's concerns about an issue for which there is little or weak evidence in the literature that decision-makers can use for addressing it. The research problems in the research agenda will be further broken up into specific, policy-relevant research questions (and objectives) that will bridge current gaps in evidence for decision-making.

The programme will leverage existing partnerships, build new ones and explore opportunities for funding evidence generation that the FCDO is unable to cover. Our primary method for evidence generation will continue to be a collaborative, co-constructive approach with participatory end-users. The end-users will participate in the research design, data collection, analysis, reflection, and evidence application for addressing the problems and gaps identified by the stakeholders.

Disclaimer

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ACRONYMS

AENN	Addressing Education in Northeast Nigeria
ALP	Accelerated Learning Programs
BAY	Borno, Adamawa and Yola
CCAC	Conflict and Crisis-Affected Contexts
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DFID	Department for International Development
EASEL	Ecological Approaches to Social Emotional Learning
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECR	Education Crisis Response
EDOREN	Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria
Ed-Tech	Education Technology
EiE	Education in Emergencies
EiEWG	Education in Emergencies Working Group
EMIS	Education Management Information System
EPRD	Education Planning, Research and Development
ERICC	Education Research in Conflict and protracted Crisis
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
FHI	Family Health International
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
FRN	Federal Republic of Nigeria
GCPEA	Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack
GEMR	Global Education Monitoring Report
GON	Government of Nigeria
ICIR	International Centre for Investigative Reporting
IIEP	International Institute for Education Planning
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ITQE	Islamiyya, Tsangaya and Qur'anic Education
JSS	Junior Secondary School
KII	Key informant interview
LGAs	Local Government Areas
LGEA	Local Government Education Authority
MoE	Ministry of Education
NE	North-East
NEST	North-East State Transformation Strategy
NPA	National Personnel Audit
NREC	National Research Ethics Committee
OCHA	Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OOSC	Out-of-School Children
RRD	Regional Research Director
SEL	Social-emotional Learning
TDP	Teacher Development Programme

I. BACKGROUND

The Education Research in Conflict and Protracted Crisis (ERICC) programme is a large-scale FCDO-funded investment from 2 December 2021 to 1 December 2024 to generate new, rigorous research evidence on the **most effective approaches to education provision** in conflict and protracted crisis contexts. The programme aims to **expand and deepen operational and policy-relevant evidence** to support **bold reform in education delivery** in conflict- and crisis-affected contexts (CCAC).

The programme is implemented in six focal countries – Bangladesh (Cox's Bazaar), Nigeria, South Sudan, and the Syria region (Jordan, Lebanon and Syria) with four main components: (1) research on the **most effective approaches to education delivery** in conflict and protracted crisis; (2) operational in-country support; (3) promoting research uptake across FCDO and the international community, and (4) knowledge systems strengthening. This research agenda focuses on the first component and sets out the programme's strategy for generating research on the **most effective approaches to education delivery** in Nigeria's conflict and protracted crisis context. The research agenda contains the main themes, problems that will be addressed, their source, the principles that will underpin the research activities, and plans for the impactful delivery of the research agenda.

A. The context of conflict and protracted crisis in education in Nigeria

For more than a decade, the insurgent group formerly known as Boko Haram ravaged the schooling system in Northeast Nigeria. The group's original name, Jamaat-u-Ahlis-Sunna-Lidda-Awati Wal-Jihad, meant people committed to the propagation of the Prophet's teaching and Jihad. The group was conceived in ideological opposition to 'Western' education, culture and ways of life (Oyewole, 2015; Williams & Istifanus, 2017). The name Boko Haram translates as 'Western' education (boko) is forbidden or sinful (haram) (Iyekekpolo, 2016). While the group has existed since the early 2000s (Iyekekpolo, 2016), its turning point came in 2009 after a deadly conflict with security forces resulted in large civilian deaths and the death of its leader at the time. The emergence of a new leader in 2010 heralded a turning point in the group's activities and the beginning of a new era of violence, particularly against the [infra]structures and key constituents of education in the northeast. State entities and security forces have also been key targets, as have churches and mosques (UNESCO-IIEP & World Bank, 2021).

In addition to systems and structures of education, the violence wrought by the group has devastated the economic and social infrastructure of the primarily agrarian northeast, affecting the livelihoods of more than 6 million people (FRN & World Bank, 2016). The worst affected states are Borno, Adamawa and Yobe (the 'BAY' states), with Borno as the epicentre. Estimates suggest more than 20,000 people have been killed, more than 2 million displaced in various locations (FRN & World Bank, 2015, 2016). Abductions, usually of women and children, and recruitment (sometimes coerced), usually of men and boys, also form part of Boko Haram's operational strategies. An estimated 53% of the displaced are women, 57% are children under 18 years of age, and 29% are children and youth between the ages of 6 and 17 (FRN & World Bank, 2015). Borno hosts the greatest proportion, 66%, of all internally displaced, while Yobe hosts 6% and Adamawa has 6.3%. 92% of those internally displaced live with host communities, and only 8.5% live in camps and camp-like settings. An estimated 3 million people still reside in inaccessible and insecure areas (FRN & World Bank, 2016).

Prior to and apart from the conflict, education indicators and outcomes in Northern Nigeria overall were the poorest in the country, driven, as UNICEF (2017) suggests, by social attitudes around education, particularly for girls. Nigeria has the highest number of child brides in West and Central Africa (UNESCO-IIEP & World Bank, 2021). The conflict therefore exacerbated an already challenging educational situation. Recent estimates suggest there are now 19.7 million out-of-school children (OOSC) in Nigeria (49% of whom are

primary school-aged children), the third largest in the world after India and Pakistan (GEMR Team & UNESCO-UIS, 2022), most of whom are in Northeast Nigeria (Antoninis, 2014).

Policies exist to enable access to quality education and ensure its continuity such as National Gender Policy (2006), National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development (2007), National Policy on Gender in Basic Education (2006), National Policy on Education (2013), National School-based Management Policy (2016), National Policy on Inclusive Education in Nigeria (2016) and the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools (2021). However, these policies have not been effective in ensuring access to education or enhancing its quality and continuity in conflict and crisis. The conflict has hindered access to quality education by disrupting agricultural activities, decreasing household income, and increasing the risk of malnutrition and stunting. Consequently, education has become less of a priority, increasing the likelihood of dropouts. It has also likely affected the quality of learning for those who could attend school (UNESCO-IIEP & World Bank, 2021).

While Boko Haram continues its campaign against the government, civilians and education infrastructure in the northeast, albeit now through affiliated splinter groups (GCPEA, 2022), more recently, education in Northern Nigeria has come under attack from seemingly less explicitly ideologically motivated groups. For example, more than 1,400 students were abducted in Nigerian schools between January and September 2021. This situation prompted the closure of more than 600 schools across seven northern states between December 2020 and April 2021 (GCPEA, 2022). However, the attribution of the abductions by one arm of the government to criminal banditry and by another to terrorism hints at the increasing connection between ideological and criminal violence against education in Northern Nigeria (Ojewale, 2021). Among the state's worst affected by this emergent hybrid form of violence are Kaduna and Zamfara. We included Kaduna as a focus state for the research agenda due to its generally conducive environment for development implementation.

B. ERICC Nigeria Research Agenda Development

The four research agenda themes (policy, systems and sustainability; teacher issues; data; social and emotional learning) were developed through a co-constructive process during the *country scan*. The [country scan](#) was an iterative, multi-component process consisting of a rapid systematic [literature review](#); [stakeholder mapping](#); [key informant](#) interviews; a [data systems](#) review and stakeholder [prioritisation](#) workshops. Literature on the condition of education in the main conflict-affected northeastern states of Borno, Adamawa and Yobe was searched, reviewed and synthesised to identify gaps in the existing evidence. Policymakers across the Federal and State Ministries of Education and other representatives of the stakeholder community were identified and ranked according to their level of influence and interest in education in the CCAC of Nigeria. Although Borno, Adamawa and Yobe, as the most affected states, were the focus of the literature review, the country scan process was conducted with federal stakeholders in Abuja, Adamawa, Borno and Kaduna. Kaduna was included due to more recent but highly intense attacks on its education system, accessibility from Abuja, literature richness and general receptiveness towards development partner activities, particularly FCDO education projects.

In addition to the influence and interest mapping exercise, the stakeholders identified key informants for interviews about their experiences and perspectives concerning gaps in evidence for improving access, quality and continuity of education and policy-practice coherence in the CCAC of Nigeria. Data systems, including EMIS were reviewed for the types of data and their use in decision-making. The gaps in evidence identified in the literature review, interviews and data systems review were then discussed with Federal and State stakeholders, who further reflected, prioritised, and thematically grouped the gaps according to their potential impact, urgency, and the likelihood of policy uptake. The results of the country scan process form the basis of this research agenda.

II. OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

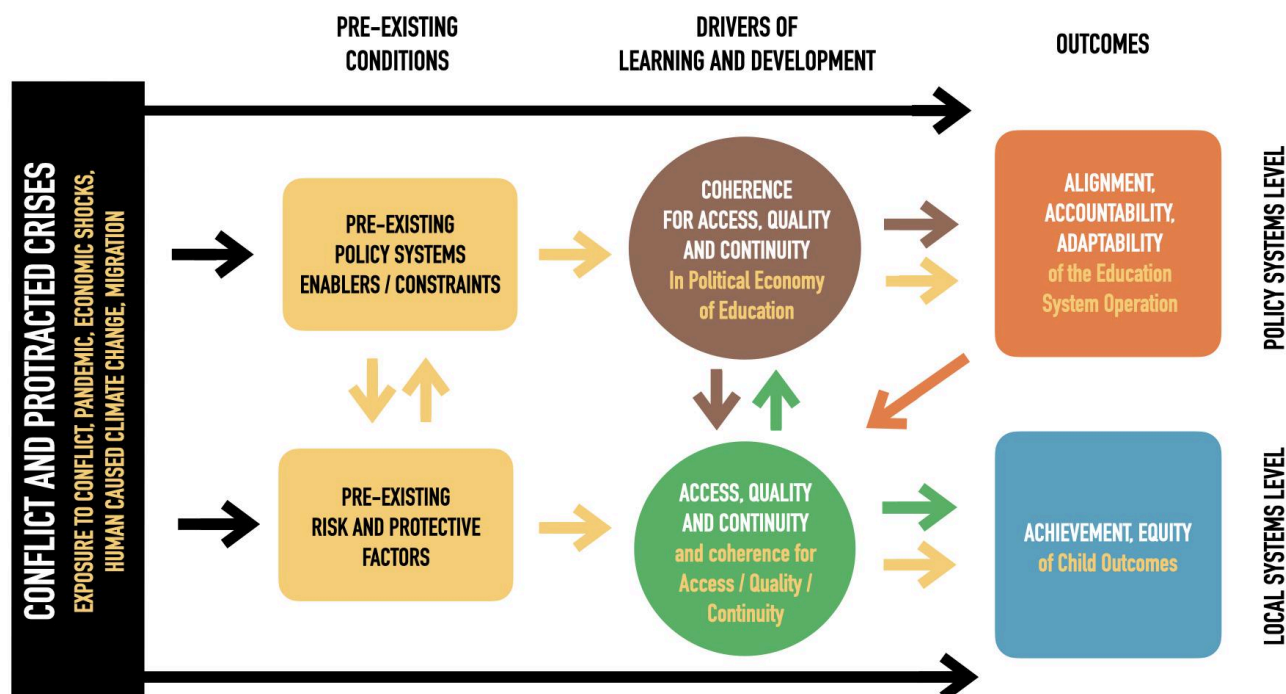
A. A conceptual framework for building an interconnected and coherent body of evidence in EiE settings

Theoretically, the agenda is anchored by the [ERICC Conceptual Framework](#) (Kim, H. Y. et al., 2022). The conceptual framework allows us to pinpoint the gaps in existing research on education in crisis and conflict to date, locate research and interventions for policy and programming that is based on evidence, and thereby identify evidence gaps in current research. The framework also provides a common viewpoint for programming, policy and investment decisions to improve children’s learning and development in crisis and conflict-affected contexts.

The conceptual framework is built on the following four drivers of academic and social and emotional learning and development:

- **Access** – to educational opportunities within and outside formal school settings,
- **Quality** – of resources (including human, economic, physical, etc.) and of relationships, norms, practices, and interactions,
- **Continuity** – of learning, i.e., sustained exposure to education that allows progression in learning and transition in schooling; and
- **Coherence** – across and within the local microsystems (e.g., school, community, and family), and national macrosystem (e.g., policies, agencies, stakeholders, etc.).

Figure 1. ERICC Conceptual Framework



The drivers are required for precipitating improvements in equity and achievement in holistic learning and developmental outcomes – vital for children in conflict and protracted crisis settings – in order to fully engage in economic, political, and social activities in modern society such as foundational literacy and numeracy, as well as social and emotional learning outcomes and physical and mental health. The research

agenda aims to build a strong foundation of evidence for understanding how the four drivers operate in the CCAC context of Nigeria.

B. Engaging stakeholders in co-creating the research agenda

The fundamental principles underpinning the research agenda are embedded within the notion of co-creation. We adopt the broad definition of co-creation suggested by Greenhalgh et al. (2016) as the collaborative generation of knowledge by researchers and stakeholders from other sectors and consider the concept synonymously with others, such as co-construction, co-production, and co-design. The concept, for us, also adheres to the aims of participatory research, which seeks to involve all research partners collaboratively and equitably across all phases of a research process (Oetzel, 2022). Drawing on these ideas, we adopt the principles to brace up the research activities.

1. Stakeholder mapping: we brainstormed with officials of the Ministry of Education, civil society, international and national development organisations, research and training institutions to identify and map the level of influence and interest in education in CCACs.
2. Key informant Interviews (KII): we interviewed identified stakeholders and collated their concerns about the evidence required for improving access, quality and continuity of education that is coherent with policy.
3. We reviewed data systems to identify and document the types of data available, how data is collected, and how it is used for decision-making.
4. We ran stakeholder workshops to prioritise stakeholders' concerns about evidence for decision-making.
5. We completed a literature review looking for evidence in line with policy and practice across education access, quality and continuity. We then compared this evidence with stakeholder concerns to determine which evidence gaps needed to be filled through research.

Experience from previous FCDO-funded research programmes such as the Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria (EDOREN) demonstrated that Nigerian policymakers are more likely to use evidence that they co-create (Watts & Akogun, 2018). As already alluded to, representatives from the Federal and State Ministries of Education; and the Federal Department of Education Planning, Research and Development (EPRD) and its state equivalents participated in the country scan process to prioritise evidence gaps and identify the research themes presented in this document. Implementing the research agenda, particularly research activities, will continue to involve these and other key stakeholders, including civil society, legislature and primary interest groups.

C. A robust approach to identify research questions and methods that are fit for purpose

In order to build evidence about what works, how, for whom and at what cost, we conduct different types of research according to the state of the evidence:

- **Formative Research:** When there is little information available about a context or when we need a greater basic understanding of existing needs, we conduct formative research to identify the characteristics of a setting and factors influencing it. Specifically, we conduct descriptive and/or correlational research to better understand a problem, context, population, and the processes and factors that may influence key outcomes. We then use the information to develop clear hypotheses about the need to generate an intervention.
- **Design research:** When we have enough information about a problem in a given context, we review existing local solutions and engage in design research to refine them and/or to develop feasible, and potentially cost-effective scalable interventions to improve education outcomes. Through

design research, we uncover users' needs, values, and existing behaviours as they relate to a specific intervention. We engage users in every step of the process of designing solutions to their problems; from generating ideas, to rapidly prototyping, testing and refining them, with desirability, scale, impact, and cost-efficiency as core goals.

- **Implementation research:** To test whether strategies, policies or programs that have been deemed to be feasible and desirable are implemented as intended in cost-efficient ways, we conduct implementation research studies. We collect qualitative, quantitative and monitoring data to check that the proposed intervention is implemented as intended, and we use the information to identify the degree to which the assumptions of their theory of change are met or not on the ground. We identify the dosage, quality and fidelity of implementation, and the factors affecting it to determine the weaknesses and strengths of particular implementation strategies. We use the information to improve cost-efficiency and the potential for cost-effectiveness.
- **Effectiveness research:** When we have enough evidence that a strategy, policy or program is feasible, desirable and cost-efficient, we run rigorous tests to determine whether the intervention is effective and to shed light into how it promotes change in key outcomes of interest. We conduct experimental or quasi experimental studies to compare the changes in the outcomes of participants who received the opportunity to benefit from an intervention (treatment) with the outcomes of participants who did not receive this offer (control). We also collect costing data and compare it with the cost and impact of other available interventions to determine whether the observed effects are worth the cost.

D. Following the highest standards of integrity and ethics

The research agenda will be operationalised according to the highest professional standards, in adherence to the existing national codes of ethics on research with human participants, and in respect of local norms and processes. Ethical clearance will be obtained from the National Research Ethics Committee (NREC), and social approval from the States. The research will consider whether "risks to subjects are reasonable concerning anticipated benefits... and the importance of the knowledge that may result" (Humanitarian Advisory Group, 2020) in proposal development. Researchers will be trained on protocols for obtaining informed consent even when data collection methods are remote. Researchers will sign confidentiality agreements, which stipulate that breaches of confidentiality will result in termination. Research partners will develop and train staff on protocols for reporting and responding to breaches of confidentiality without the threat of repercussion.

III. RESEARCH THEMES

We identified five themes through the co-constructive country scan process to expand and strengthen the evidence base around the key drivers of access, quality, and continuity of education in conflict and protracted crisis:

- Policy and systems
- Teacher issues
- Data
- Social and emotional learning; and
- Sustainability

The themes were further prioritised based on clarity of objectives, researchability, alignment with ERICC's conceptual framework, level of effort required, study approach and sources of funding. Given funding limitations, we recognised that only two themes could be funded directly by the programme, with the rest

through fund-raising and leveraging existing partnerships. Guided by these themes, potential research questions have been generated to provide further strategic direction around the research agenda.

Below is an elaboration on the themes, drawing on stakeholder concerns expressed through the country scan process and fact-checking how the concern has been addressed in the literature to determine the knowledge gaps for investigation. The issues are broad and cross-cutting between themes and research problems. However, they each address different problems, which will become obvious when the specific research questions are developed for each research problem in the concept notes.

A. Research theme: education policy and system

A.1. Background and existing evidence

Prior to the Boko Haram conflict in 2009, Nigeria had established and laid out a long-term vision plan for social and economic progress in its Vision 20:2020 (2008) development plan, with basic education as one of its main pillars. The education component of the plan was sustained by education statutes such as universal basic education (UBE ACT in 2004), and the Child Rights act (2003). Supportive policies on education were also formulated: the National Gender Policy (2006), the National Policy for Integrated Early Childhood Development (2007), and the National Policy on Gender in Basic Education (2006). Post-conflict, the National Policy on Education (2013), National School-based Management Policy (2016), the National Policy on Inclusive Education (2016) and the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-Free Schools (2021). However, one of the most pressing needs after the conflict has been “the reconstruction and rehabilitation of damaged and destroyed infrastructure and equipment” (FRN & World Bank, 2016) in the most affected areas. Policies and initiatives that directly respond to the crisis include the Presidential Initiative for the North-East (PINE), the North-East States Transformation Strategy (NEST), and the Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment (RPBA). The latter is a project with funding from the World Bank, United Nations, and European Union to be implemented in the six affected states in the northeast.

Despite the commitment to education and due to the focus on reconstruction and recovery, Nigeria's education results are still lagging. Reportedly, there are 19 million out of school. Additionally, even when children are in school, they are not learning, with academic outcomes in the northeast states among the poorest in the country. In 2010, 17% and 27% of children aged 5 to 16 were literate and numerate (could correctly sum two single-digit numbers) respectively. Though by 2015, children's literacy and numeracy rates increased by 28% and 29% respectively, the northeast region rates still considerably lag other regions. For example, those of the southwest with 79% and 89% respectively. More recently, baseline assessments of education interventions have also reported low literacy and numeracy (Diazgranados et al, 2018; Diazgranados et al, 2022). Studies have pointed out significant negative effects of the conflict on children's access to formal schooling. For example, analyses suggest that a one standard deviation increase in the number of fatalities within a 5 km radius of a child's village resulted in a reduction of 0.6 years of education completed, an 11% reduction relative to the 5.2 years of average completion in the region. However, other studies suggest that enrolment is at similar levels as pre-crisis. An early study concluded that among the factors constraining the effective implementation of UBE are insufficient funds, materials and learning facilities, inadequately qualified teachers, poor teacher motivation, and lack of guidance and counselling services.

Findings from the ERICC country scan KII showed that the National Policy on Safety, Security and Violence-free schools is the only policy that specifically addressed issues of education in conflict and protracted crisis. However, the scope and objective of this policy fell short of specifically addressing some conflict-related education issues such as seamless transition from one formal school to another and also between different types of schools (formal/non-formal).

Stakeholders expressed concern about the failure of existing laws and policies in practice, particularly concerning children in or displaced from CCACs within the country. Concerns were also evoked around the lack of involvement of primary interest groups in policy formulation and implementation, with this issue highlighted as an area needing deeper research. In this regard, the country scan stakeholder map (add citation) suggests that groups with primary interest in education do not participate in policies and their implementation. Findings indicated that although the influence is low, communities, parents, and children have the highest interest in the type of education that the government offers. However, few of these stakeholders are included in the education decision-making process. This reveals a shift in education because historically, Nigerian communities were at the forefront of education and learning. They built schools, developed infrastructure, and ensured children's access to school while the government was concerned about quality, and assessment. Communities also participated indirectly in teacher management and motivation (gifts, honour, and recognition) and indirectly assessed quality of learning (visiting schools, assigning tasks to children at home e.g., letter writing, sums). Community schools were comparable with the best schools as community members were active in school management while private ownership was often negligible.

The introduction of the UBE Act and the compulsory acquisition of schools from communities in the late 90s excluded communities from school governance and contributed to the inability of the education system to respond to local emergencies. Communities are not aligned with, and are suspicious of school-based management committees (SBMC) due to their inability to ensure access, quality and continuity of the type of education they prefer. Communities' attempt to resolve the disagreement with the government about the purpose, nature and process of education has led to multiple strategies for providing education. That the government ignores these alternatives further increases the suspicion and misalignment with the UBE Act. It will be useful to determine the type of education and intervention programs that communities consider worth scaling up or sustaining as appropriate for their children, along with the reasons for their preference.

The country scan literature review highlighted challenges in the coordination and implementation of Nigeria's policy formulation processes (UNESCO-IIEP & World Bank, 2021), attributable, as some suggest, to the country's prevailing social, political, economic, and power structures (Bello et al., 2017). However, we found little to no research on how the Child's Right Act, the UBE act and related policies are being implemented in conflict affected settings in Nigeria, and whether these laws and policies are leading to cost-effective improvements in access, quality and continuity of education for children in contexts of conflict and crisis.

A.2. Evidence Gap and Research Aims

- There is little to no information on how existing education policies are implemented to ensure access, quality, and continuity of education, and the degree to which there is policy-practice coherence in conflict and crisis contexts. There is no information on how the UBE Act and other related policies are implemented, or information on the factors that enable or hinder implementation.
- There is no specific strategy for implementing policy on education in conflict and protracted crisis, or policy-implementation coherence to address issues associated with education in conflict and crisis. For example, there are no clear policies on transition, or coordination among various actors, Teacher Development Programme (TDP) for untrained community facilitators and teachers in the non-formal and formal sectors, and the incorporation of social and emotional learning and mental health support. Research is needed to identify how these policy and policy-implementation gaps can be filled.
- There is no information on the impact of existing policies on access, quality and continuity of education of children in conflict affected settings.

To address these gaps, we propose conducting research (See Box 1 for detailed research questions) with the following aims:

- **Aim 1:** To assess the implementation of existing education policies on access, quality and continuity of education in context of conflict and crisis.
- **Aim 2:** To develop strategies to implement the UBE act and other policies to improve access, quality and continuity of education in conflict and protracted crisis settings.
- **Aim 3:** To assess the cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness of strategies to implement the UBE act and related policies in conflict affected settings of Northeast Nigeria.

Box 1. Indicative research questions for research theme: Education policy and system

Aim 1: To assess the implementation of existing education policies on access, quality and continuity of education in context of conflict and crisis.

- **Implementation research at the systems level**
 - To what degree are existing national-level policies to improve access, quality and continuity being implemented in contexts of conflict and crisis in NE Nigeria? What are the gaps in implementation?
 - What strategies are being used to implement the UBE act and related policies in contexts of conflict and crisis?
 - What factors facilitate and hinder implementation of different strategies?
 - What is the cost of implementing these strategies?
 - To what degree do these strategies address the needs of primary interest groups and influencers?

Aim 2: To develop strategies to implement the UBE act and other policies to improve access, quality and continuity of education in conflict and protracted crisis settings.

- **Design research at the systems level**
 - What are the most feasible, desirable, and potentially cost-efficient and cost-effective strategies to implement the UBE act in conflict and crisis settings?
 - How do preferences vary for different groups of stakeholders (i.e., primary interests groups and influencers) and demographic groups (e.g. gender, socioeconomic status, displacement status, victim status, disability status)?
 - How are the different strategies aligned with the priorities of donors, policymakers and implementers and beneficiaries?

Aim 3: To assess the cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness of strategies to implement the UBE act and related policies in conflict affected settings of Northeast Nigeria.

- **Implementation and Effectiveness research at the policy-systems level**
 - Who and how many beneficiaries are being served?
 - What is their perception of the strategies to implement the UBE act?
 - What are their experiences with the services provided?
 - What factors have enabled and hindered the implementation of different strategies?
 - What is the impact of the strategies on access, quality and continuity?
 - How does the impact vary by gender, socio-economic status, displacement status, and region?
 - What is the cost per output of different strategies? (e.g. cost per child / Per school / per household / per community) What is the cost per outcome (e.g. cost per improvement in indicators of access, quality, continuity, learning) of different strategies?
 - Which strategy is more cost-effective?

Table 1. Links to target system, drivers and outcomes in ERICC’s conceptual framework, type of research needed, partner opportunities and tentative timeline

Number	1	2	3
Aims	To assess the implementation of existing education policies on access, quality and continuity of education in the context of conflict and crisis, and help construct policies for these settings.	To develop strategies to implement the UBE act and other policies to improve access, quality and continuity of education in conflict and protracted crisis settings.	To evaluate the impact of education policies on access, quality, and continuity of education in contexts of conflict and crisis
Target system	MoE, Secretaries of Education in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa	MoE, Secretaries of Education in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa	MoE, Secretaries of Education and schools, teachers and children in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa
Drivers	Coherence	Coherence	Coherence, Access, Quality and Continuity
Outcomes	Policies, budgets, and data systems	Policies, budgets, and data systems	Policies, Access, Quality and Continuity
Research types	Systems level: PEA or RISE	Design research	Impact Evaluation

A.3. Expected impact on education policy and programming

Recognising that the overall goal of education policies is to provide access to quality education for all, as well as ensure progression from one level to the other, research will aim at determining the extent to which each policy is implemented to achieve these objectives. Research will identify for each component, factors that facilitate or hinder implementation. The knowledge product will highlight what influences policy-practice coherence, barriers to policy-intended goals, and test novel strategies for implementing policies for ensuring access, quality and continuity of education in conflict and crisis affected settings.

B. Research theme: teacher issues

B.1. Background and existing evidence

UNESCO recently reported that the number of OOSC in Nigeria has risen to 19.7 million (UNESCO, 2022). While these UNESCO figures are not publicly available on a State-by-State basis, one source has estimated them as follows: 489,855 OOSC in Adamawa; 266,478 OOSC in Borno; and 652,990 OOSC in Kaduna (The Guardian,

2022). According to UNESCO (2016), teacher shortages have contributed to the high number of OOSC in Nigeria– the majority of whom are in areas of conflict and crisis in Northern Nigeria. The GoN uses the National Personnel Audit (NPA) to estimate the number of teachers required to deliver legally mandated levels of education. The 2018 audit, carried out before the COVID-19 pandemic, is the latest for which figures are available and showed a national shortage of 277,537 teachers in the basic education sector.

Like learners, teachers in Nigeria have been adversely affected by the conflict. It is estimated that more than 600 teachers were killed in the northeast and northwest (411 in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa), with more than 19,000 forced to flee between 2009 and 2015 (Human Rights Watch, 2016b). Teachers, headteachers and school administrators –particularly females–, have also suffered from threats, harassment and abduction (Foluke & Hyacinth, 2017).

Even when children are in school, they are reported not to be learning significantly, partly due to the low quality of teachers in the workforce. Historically there have been challenges with the recruitment and training of teachers in Nigeria. The UBEC (2012) report noted that teachers’ lack of formal qualifications has been a persistent issue. In 2010, 32%, 40%, and 15% of the teaching staff lacked formal qualifications in pre-primary, primary and secondary education respectively. The latest estimates from the country scan evidence review indicate that 20% of the basic education teachers in public schools are untrained, fuelling concerns about the quality of education children are receiving. Drawing on data from the 2018 Annual School Census (ASC), UNESCO reported that at least one in five teachers in public primary and junior secondary schools are not qualified to teach and that this number almost doubles in the private sector (UNESCO, 2021, pp. 134–38).

Additionally, existing teachers face severe constraints in schools and classrooms (UNESCO–IIEP & World Bank, 2021). A joint Education Needs Assessment that conducted surveys and focus group discussions with teachers in the northeast found that barriers to quality include teacher absenteeism; low and delayed salaries; poor teaching conditions (infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, and lack of materials); lack of respect for teachers; low teacher morale, motivation and wellbeing; and lack of structured teacher professional development opportunities.

To address the issue of teacher shortages and lack of qualified teachers, the DFID-funded project Education Data, Research and Evaluation in Nigeria (EDOREN) carried out a study in 2017 on the identification, recruitment and deployment of effective teachers in Kaduna State (EDOREN, 2017; Allsop & Watts, 2018). The findings were immediately taken up by the State government and used for development of teacher guidelines and reforming the recruitment process. The subsequent satisfaction of the State government with the evidence-based effective teacher identification and recruitment has attracted many States to adopt these guidelines. For example, when the Adamawa State Governor announced plans to establish a Teachers’ Service Commission that will be responsible for recruiting teachers using the Kaduna model (Daily Post, 2022), some State lawmakers introduced a bill to back up the plan. However, there is no research documenting the degree to which the guidelines developed by EDOREN to identify, recruit and deploy teachers have been implemented as intended or in cost-efficient ways, or whether they have had any impact on the number and quality of teachers available in Kaduna to meet the great demand for teachers in the region. Additionally, more research is needed to identify the adaptations that would be relevant for the uptake of these guidelines in different states.

B.2. Evidence Gap and Type of Research Needed

- Implementation research at the systems level Information on the impact, cost-efficiency and cost-effectiveness of implementing teacher identification, recruitment, deployment and retention measures in settings of conflict and protracted crisis for ensuring access, quality and continuity of basic education.

- Information on the adaptability of existing policy-level intervention elements to increase the teacher workforce to new conflict and crisis settings in NE Nigeria. Research is needed to understand how to adapt cost-effective strategies to identify, recruit, deploy and retain teachers in conflict affected settings.
- Approach for implementing an effective, efficient and cost-effective learning facilitator and teacher professional development model in conflict and crisis affected settings in Nigeria. Research is needed to identify the impact of teacher professional development models.

To address these gaps, we propose conducting research studies (see Box 2 for detailed research questions) with the following aims:

- **Aim 1:** Document how efficiently and effectively the teacher recruitment, deployment and retention plan in Kaduna State has been implemented to improve access, quality and continuity of education in NE Nigeria.
- **Aim 2:** Develop an effective and efficient model for identifying, recruiting, and retaining effective learning facilitators and teachers in Adamawa State.
- **Aim 3:** Test the efficiency and effectiveness of innovative Ed-Tech TDP models to improve teaching quality in Northeast Nigeria.

Box 2: Indicative research questions for research theme: teacher issues

Aim 1: Document how efficiently and effectively the teacher recruitment, deployment and retention plan in Kaduna State has been implemented to improve access, quality and continuity of education in NE Nigeria

- **Implementation research:**
 - How efficiently have the policies/guidelines of the teacher recruitment, deployment and retention policy been implemented as intended in Kaduna State?
 - What levels of uptake do we observe?
 - What factors have acted as implementation barriers and constraints?
 - What factors have enhanced or inhibited the implementation of the teacher recruitment, deployment and retention plan in Kaduna?
 - What has been the cost of implementing the teacher recruitment, deployment and retention plan in Kaduna?
- **Effectiveness research:**
 - What has been the effect of the teacher recruitment, deployment and retention plan on: 1) quality of teachers recruited and teacher retention, 2) indicators of children's access, learning and continuity in Kaduna?

Aim 2: Develop an effective and efficient model for identifying, recruiting, and retaining effective learning facilitators and teachers in Adamawa State

- **Design research:**
 - How feasible is it to adapt Kaduna's teacher recruitment, deployment and retention plan to Adamawa and other states in Northeast Nigeria affected by conflict and crises?
 - What are the enablers and constraints for the uptake of Kaduna's teacher recruitment, deployment and retention policy in other states affected by conflict and crises?
 - How desirable is Kaduna's teacher recruitment, deployment and retention plan to key system level decision makers in humanitarian coordination and government education system-level actors?

- o What can we learn from private and other non-public education providers concerning the identification, recruitment, and retention of teachers and learning facilitators in conflict and protracted crisis settings?

Aim 3: Test the efficiency and effectiveness of innovative Ed-Tech TDP models to improve teacher quality in Northeast Nigeria

- **Implementation research:**

- o What quality and fidelity of implementation do we observe for EdTech-supported TDP models for learning facilitators and teachers in Nigeria?
- o What factors influence the application of EdTech-supported TDP models for learning facilitators and teachers in Northeast Nigeria?
- o How efficient, affordable and acceptable is the application of EdTech for the development of learning facilitators and teacher professional development?
- o What is the cost per teacher of an EdTech TDP model?

- **Effectiveness research:**

- o What is the impact of EdTech-supported TDP models on teachers' quality of instruction, motivation and wellbeing?
- o How do the effects of EdTech-supported TDP models vary for teachers by age, gender, level of education, teaching experience?
- o What is the effect of EdTech-supported TDP models on students' academic outcomes, SEL and wellbeing?
- o Is the impact worth the cost?

Table 2. Links to target system, drivers and outcomes in ERICC's conceptual framework, type of research needed, partner opportunities and tentative timeline

Number	1	2	3
Aims	Assess how effectively and efficiently the teacher recruitment, deployment and retention plan in Kaduna State has been implemented to improve access, quality and continuity of education in Northeast Nigeria	Adapt Kaduna's teacher recruitment, deployment and retention plan to Adamawa's teacher policies to improve access, quality and continuity of education in conflict and protracted crisis settings.	Test the efficiency and effectiveness of innovative Ed-Tech TDP models in improving teacher quality in Northeast Nigeria
Target system	School, classrooms, household, community, MoE-NGO relationship)	School, classrooms, household, community, MoE-NGO relationship)	School, classrooms, community, MoE-NGO relationship)
Drivers	Coherence, access and quality	Coherence, access and quality	Coherence, and Quality
Outcomes	Policy, accountability mechanism	Policy, accountability mechanism	Achievement and equity in academic outcomes, SEL,

Research types	Implementation and Effectiveness	Design	Implementation and Effectiveness
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B.3. Expected impact on education policy and programming and on the ERICC evidence base

Addressing these gaps in evidence will provide policymakers in CCACs with the tools for making decisions concerning:

- How to improve the quality of implementation of the Kaduna State teacher identification and recruitment guideline.
- Using evidence to inform the development of a bill before the Adamawa State Legislative Assembly for the teacher recruitment, deployment and management and influencing the development of teacher identification, recruitment, and deployment in Yobe and Borno States.
- Improving the quality, delivery and effectiveness of an EdTech-supported TDP program in Northeast Nigeria and evaluating the conditions under which it could be scaled up to other conflict affected settings.

C. Research theme: data

C.1. Background and existing evidence

The production of high-quality education data and its use for decision-making is limited in Northeast Nigeria. Despite the involvement of local, federal, and state levels, current monitoring and evaluation systems generate inadequate and inaccurate information for informing policy making and program implementation (FRN & World Bank, 2016). Underdeveloped information systems need upgrading in terms of data gathering, accuracy, processing, and reporting. Limited capacity also inhibits staff from gathering and using data strategically. Further, current monitoring and evaluation systems generate inadequate and inaccurate information to inform policy making and program implementation data collection and validation. A study in Adamawa State (Dunne et al., 2013) corroborates these challenges, finding that the State's underdeveloped data information system requires upgrading to allow strengthened data collection, review, processing, storage, and reporting.

Specifically, the study documented that school administrators have limited capacity to complete data returns, challenging the creation of school development strategies and compounding data challenges at the local and State levels. Stakeholders observed that there is neither appreciation nor capacity to collect quality data, or to store, process and use them for decision-making at the school, community, local government, and State levels. The literature also revealed significant challenges around the generation of high-quality data in the northeast. This was related to the capacity of head teachers to complete data returns, the accuracy of data, and the disaggregation of data, all of which contribute to poor data quality, impeding macro-level planning by the Local Government Education Authorities (LGEA) and the States, and constraining the ability stakeholders have to effectively respond to the crisis (Moshood & Thovoethin, 2017; Dunne et al., 2013). To address the data-related issues, the Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment (RPBA), proposed that the use of third-party monitoring be institutionalised across sectors (FRN & World Bank, 2016).

ERICC's country data-system mapping in Nigeria identified the range of data collected by different stakeholders and its different uses in the northeast. Government agencies collect annual school census data and personnel audits, while development partners collect intervention, monitoring and evaluation data using Early Grade Math and Early Grade Reading assessments. School census provides data on

infrastructure; student and teacher populations; student grade level and progression, school development plans and family characteristics. However, during KII and workshops, stakeholders expressed concerns that the available data do not help them determine issues across a range of outcomes including children's social emotional learning, the number of children in the community that are out of school, or the proportion of children that transition from secondary education to the job market or higher education.

Some initiatives have aimed to address data-related issues in Nigeria. In 2013, a 5-year DFID-funded Education Data, Research, and Evaluation in Nigeria (EDOREN) programme, aimed to embed evidence into education programming by generating and using data in all DFID education programs and to subsequently build national capacity for data use in decision-making. In 2018, FHI 360 established Data Hubs through USAID's Addressing Education in Northeast Nigeria (AENN), which aimed to increase access to and use of quality data for practitioners and policy makers interested in improving access, quality and continuity of education in the region. FHI 360 provided computers, programs, and training to set up 17 Data Hubs in Yobe, Borno and Adamawa, which managed data on the first nine years of students' education, as well as on school personnel and education structures. However, effective implementation of the DataHubs was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic.

At the end of AENN, FHI 360 handed over the Data Hubs to the government, to be managed by the Head of Education Management Information Systems (EMIS) and a team of EMIS Officers, under the supervision and monitoring of the State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB). In 2022, the IRC began collaborating with the government through USAID's Opportunities to Learn (OTL) program to improve Data Hubs in Northeast Nigeria. A needs assessment conducted to identify data-related issues affecting the quality, accuracy and effective use of data showed that the Data Hubs are experiencing challenges related to power; internet connectivity; manual data collection processes; inadequate skills and lack of capacity-building opportunities for staff; and insufficient funding, among others (OTL, 2022). The findings of the assessment could be used to inform the development of an improvement plan to strengthen the Data Hubs in Northeast Nigeria. Additionally, research could help us identify the degree to which strengthening data-systems could lead to higher alignment, accountability and adaptability of the system, and potentially, to higher levels of access, quality and continuity of education in contexts of conflict and crisis.

C.2. Evidence Gaps and Aims of Future Research

The evidence gaps are:

- Information is needed on feasible and potentially cost-efficient strategies for improving DataHubs operations in Northeast Nigeria.
- Information is needed on the degree to which existing data-system strengthening initiatives in Northeast Nigeria are successfully addressing existing data needs and driving cost-efficiency.
- Information is needed on the degree to which data-systems interventions can result in improved data quality and data use for decision making, as well as in improved levels of access, quality and continuity of education in contexts of conflict and crisis, and improved levels of alignment, accountability and adaptability of the system.

To address these gaps, we propose conducting research studies (See Box 3 for details on research questions) with the following aims:

- **Aim 1:** Develop a feasible and potentially cost-efficient and cost-effective strategy for strengthening the capacity to collect quality data and its use for decision making at different levels of the education system in conflict and protracted crisis settings.
- **Aim 2:** Assess the degree to which data-system strengthening interventions in NE Nigeria are implemented as intended and effectively address existing data-related gaps in cost-efficient ways.

- **Aim 3:** Assess the effectiveness of strategies developed to improve data use in education decisions in Northeast Nigeria.

Box 3. Indicative research questions for research theme: data

Aim 1: Develop a feasible and potentially cost-efficient and cost-effective strategy for strengthening the capacity to collect quality data and use it for making decisions at different levels of the education system in conflict and protracted crisis settings

- **Design research**
 - o What are feasible, cost-efficient and potentially cost-effective strategies to address barriers to data quality and data use for decision-making among stakeholders at different levels of the system?
 - o What factors inhibit the collection, processing and use of data in decision-making concerning access, quality and continuity of education in conflict and protracted crisis settings?
 - o What behavioural supports during different phases of the life cycle of data (design, collection, quality assurance, analysis, and dissemination) result in higher data quality and higher uptake for decision making?

Aim 2: Assess the degree to which data-system strengthening interventions in Northeast Nigeria are implemented as intended and effectively address existing data-related gaps in cost-efficient ways

- **Implementation research**
 - o To what degree data-system strengthening interventions (e.g., OTL's improvement plan for the Data Hubs) are being implemented as intended?
 - o What worked well and what did not?
 - o What bottlenecks remain that inhibit the efficient use of data for the purposes of improving access, quality and continuity in NE Nigeria?
 - o What and how do the costs of implementing data-related solutions vary by State and Data Hubs?

Aim 3: Assess the effectiveness of strategies developed to improve data use in education decisions in Northeast Nigeria

- **Effectiveness Research**
 - o To what degree have data-system improvement interventions (e.g. OTL's Data Hubs in Northeast Nigeria) resulted in:
 - Improved data quality and use of data for decision making?
 - Higher alignment, accountability and adaptability of the education system in Northeast Nigeria?

Table 3. Links to target system, drivers and outcomes in ERICC's conceptual framework, type of research needed, partner opportunities and tentative timeline

Number	1	2	3
Aims	Develop a feasible, scalable, and potentially cost-efficient and cost-effective strategy for	Assess the degree to which data-system strengthening interventions in NE Nigeria are	Assess the effectiveness of strategies developed to improve

	strengthening quality and use of data to inform policy and practice decision making in conflict and protracted crisis settings	implemented as intended and effectively address existing data gaps in cost-efficient ways	data use in education decisions in Northeast Nigeria
Target system	Policy systems level (Government and local authorities)	Policy-systems level (Government and local authorities)	Policy systems level (Government and local authorities)
Drivers	Coherence	Coherence	Coherence
Outcomes	Alignment, accountability and adaptability Access, quality and continuity	Alignment and accountability at the policy-systems level	Alignment and accountability and adaptability at the policy systems level
Research types	Design research	Implementation research	Effectiveness research

C.3. Expected impact on education policy and programming

Through design research we expect to develop innovative, contextually relevant, cost-efficient and potentially cost-effective data-solutions in Northeast Nigeria. The findings will be applied to improving the quality and use of data in education decision-making in Northeast Nigeria, particularly for assessing the degree of alignment, accountability and adaptability of existing data systems, and the levels of access, quality and continuity of education in the region.

The findings will contribute to a more nimble education system that responds efficiently and effectively to education needs and data-informed programming.

D. Research theme: social and emotional learning

D.1. Background and existing evidence

Evidence from key interviews and workshops conducted as part of ERICC's country scan in Nigeria revealed stakeholders' concerns with learners' and teachers' psychosocial, social, and emotional learning and mental health needs in the northeast. Stakeholders were particularly concerned about how to support teachers in providing relevant psychosocial and social and emotional learning support to conflict and crisis-affected children, including those who are internally displaced, former abductees and host community members.

ERICC's literature review highlighted the psychosocial and social-emotional needs of conflict and crisis-affected children in the region and highlighted the mental health consequences of the conflict in the northeast. Research shows that children in the northeast suffer from various symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, including irritability, insomnia, aggression, and poor concentration (Foluke & Hyacinth, 2017). Many children also self-report high levels of anxiety or panic attacks (Yusuf & Edemenang, 2018). Evidence from outreach sessions with conflict-affected individuals in health care facilities and displaced peoples' camps in the northeast suggests the existence of severe emotional disorders, seizures associated with

psychological distress, somatic complaints, psychotic disorders, and substance abuse, among other complaints. These symptoms are potentially exacerbated by the conditions in the camps themselves (Adesina et al., 2020). Moreover, the psychosocial effects on children who have lost parents/caregivers, siblings or relatives to the crisis are significant (Adesina & Kanmodi, 2019).

For women and girls who were sexual victims of Boko Haram, evidence suggests experiences of social isolation, depression, suicide, and suicide ideation (Read, as cited in Adesina et al., 2020). Sexual violence-related pregnancies have also been documented among liberated women and girls subjected to forced cohabitation as “marriages” and repeated sexual assaults (Oladeji et al., 2021). The effect of the violence on the mental health and wellbeing of teachers is less known.

Additionally, there is very little information on the status of children’s social emotional skills, and particularly little information on the social-emotional learning (SEL) skills that communities value and want to promote among their children and youth. Baseline reports conducted as part of DFID EiE tutoring and non-formal learning programs in Yobe and Borno documented children’s performance on a set of SEL and mental health outcomes such as hostile attribution bias, emotional regulation, conflict resolution and depression, which disaggregated their performance according to sex, disability, socio-economic status and displacement status. The studies documented that over 20% of children experience hostile attribution bias, which increases their risk of engaging in aggressive behaviours and 5% of children report severe symptoms of depression. The studies also showed that displaced children showed significantly higher levels of depression (Diazgranados & Lee, 2018; Diazgranados et al., 2019).

There is a broad and rigorous body of research indicating that SEL programming is relevant for children living in emergency contexts such as Northeast Nigeria. Children’s social-emotional development is particularly sensitive to the negative effects of stress and trauma, and children exposed to adverse childhood experiences are more likely to exhibit challenges with executive functioning, social skills, and emotion regulation (Evans & Kim, 2013). Research also indicates that SEL programs may have the largest impact on high-risk children (Jones, Brown, & Aber, 2011). This makes SEL programming particularly relevant for children living in emergency contexts who face several stressors and adverse childhood experiences, including exposure to violence; displacement; fear, anxiety, and uncertainty; and limited access to food, drinking water, safe housing, and basic medical care and education (Evans & English, 2002). Children in Nigeria, for example, face numerous social and health problems such as widespread household poverty, and conflict and violence in their communities, which have negative consequences on their psychosocial and educational well-being. These challenges are particularly acute among children in Yobe and Borno, many of whom have experienced displacement, loss of loved ones, and lack of access to quality education opportunities and social-emotional support for dealing with hardships in life.

As part of ERICC’s country scan, we identified that although SEL is not taught as part of the formal school system, a few INGOs have implemented initiatives to provide access to SEL programming in Northeast Nigeria to children affected by conflict and crisis. In the years 2014–2017, as part of USAID’s Nigeria Education Crisis Response Program, the IRC and Creative Associates implemented SEL programming in an Accelerated Learning Programs (ALP) for out of school children, as well as in a tutoring program for low-performing in-school children attending government schools in Yobe, Borno and Adamawa states. The SEL program consisted of a comprehensive SEL curriculum that provided children with explicit and structured SEL instruction based on a lesson plan. Baseline–endline data from their monitoring systems showed growth in SEL skills, but in the absence of a control group, it is not possible to determine if the changes observed can be attributed to the intervention or to other factors (Creative Associates, 2018).

In 2018–2021, with support from DFID Education in Emergencies (DFID EiE), the IRC continued to provide SEL opportunities to out of school children in non-formal learning centres, and to in-school children in a tutoring program. The SEL programming included both explicit SEL instruction through a comprehensive curriculum,

as well as infused SEL mindfulness and brain game activities that were integrated within literacy and numeracy subject matter. Two rigorous evaluations documented the impact of these programs on the academic and SEL skills. An RCT of DFID EiE tutoring program showed that at a cost of £63 per child, the tutoring program had a positive impact on students' literacy and numeracy skills. It also led to a reduction in hostile attribution bias. However, it did not have the expected impact on other SEL outcomes (Diazgranados et al., 2020; Hoyer, 2019). Similarly, an RCT of the DFID EiE ALP showed that at a cost £66 per child, the ALP improved out of school children's literacy and numeracy skills and led to a reduction in children's orientation toward the use of aggressive conflict resolution strategies. However, it did not have any impact on other SEL competencies. Qualitative data from interviews and focus groups conducted as part of this study suggested that the limited impact of the program on SEL skills was due to low perceived relevance and poor cultural fit of the SEL materials, which resulted in low uptake, and low levels of quality and fidelity of implementation (Diazgranados et al, 2022).

In response to the lack of impact of programs on SEL outcomes in Northeast Nigeria, the IRC and Harvard EASEL Lab collaborated with local teachers working in the final cohort of the DFID EiE tutoring program in Northeast Nigeria to co-design an SEL intervention that would be culturally relevant. The process included landscape research that identified the SEL skills that local stakeholders value along with locally sourced activities that teachers, parents and community members are already using to promote these SEL skills. Behavioural science and rapid prototyping cycles were then used to improve buy-in and to decrease implementation challenges faced by teachers (Bayley et al, 2022). An implementation research study of this initiative showed that the new SEL content and delivery strategy was perceived positively by local educators, who reported that the activities had high relevance and cultural/classroom fit.

Furthermore, the study showed that at a cost of \$7 dollars per child (significantly less than previous SEL initiatives), the SEL activities were used frequently in the classroom and with high levels of quality and fidelity of implementation (Diazgranados et al, 2021). While the localised skill-targeted social-emotional activities have proven to be culturally relevant and cost-efficient, there is not yet information on whether they are having a positive impact on the instructional practices of learning facilitators and on the SEL skills of children in Northeast Nigeria. Additionally, the existing skill-targeted social-emotional activities were localised for a DFID EiE program, but more information and adaptations are needed to effectively expand the skill-targeted social-emotional activities to different settings such as the formal school system. Given stakeholders' concerns, it would be particularly relevant to develop new skill-targeted social-emotional activities and/or adapt existing skill-targeted social-emotional activities to help teachers address the challenges they face when trying to integrate displaced and former abductees into the formal school system.

D.2. Evidence Gaps and Aims of Future Research

While there are many gaps related to SEL in EiE settings and NE Nigeria, we highlight the following:

- We need information on the SEL values and priorities of stakeholders in conflict and crisis in Northeast Nigeria and the state of SEL outcomes of children and teachers, with special attention to conflict affected subgroups such as host community members, internally displaced and former abductees. Additionally, we need information on the strategies that stakeholders in conflict and crisis contexts are using to promote SEL and mental health needs. Finally, we need information on the perceptions and experiences of children, teachers, parents and host community members toward internally displaced people and former abductees and how they facilitate or disrupt their reintegration into formal and non-formal school contexts.
- We need to rigorously test the impact of the skill-targeted social-emotional activities intervention -which has proven to be feasible, culturally relevant, and cost-efficient-, to identify whether it is leading to significant changes in teachers' instructional practices, the quality of the classroom and school climate, and the SEL competencies of children in conflict and crisis settings.

- If the skill-targeted social-emotional activities intervention that has already proven to be feasible, culturally relevant and cost-efficient also proves to be cost-effective, we would need research to inform adaptation of the skill-targeted social-emotional activities to the formal school system, in a way that also addresses the particular challenges that teachers and conflict and crisis-affected children face re/integrating displaced and former abductee children into formal school settings in Nigeria.

To address these gaps, we propose conducting research studies (See Box 4 for detailed research questions) with the following aims:

- **Aim 1:** Identify SEL values and needs of the community in conflict affected settings along with existing strategies to address them.
- **Aim 2:** Understand the perceptions of host community members towards those who are internally displaced and former abductees, and identify strategies to facilitate their reintegration.
- **Aim 3:** Assess the cost-effectiveness of a localised skill-targeted social-emotional activities intervention in non-formal school settings.
- **Aim 4:** Adapt skill-targeted social-emotional activities for new settings such as the formal school system.

Box 4. Indicative research questions for research theme: social and emotional learning

Aim 1. Identify SEL values and needs of the community in conflict affected settings along with existing strategies to address them

- **Formative Research**

- What SEL skills do community members (teachers, parents, children and community leaders) value in Northeast Nigeria?
- What are the SEL outcomes among children and teachers affected by conflict and crisis in Northeast Nigeria?
 - How do SEL outcomes vary by age, gender, displacement status (host, displaced, former abductees), socio-economic status, disability status and region in NE Nigeria?
- How are SEL and mental health needs being addressed? By whom and where? Are existing strategies and programs aligned with the values and priorities of the community?

Aim 2: Understand the perceptions of host community members towards those who are internally displaced and former abductees, and identify strategies to facilitate their reintegration

- **Formative Research**

- What are the perceptions of host community members (teachers, parents and children) of those who are internally displaced and former abductees? How do these perceptions affect the reintegration of those who are internally displaced and former abductees to formal and non-formal school settings?
- What strategies are educators in formal and non-formal school settings using to address the challenges of reintegration of displaced and former abductee children into school settings?
- How are teachers in conflict and protracted crisis affected settings being prepared to promote healing and reconciliation and to support internally displaced and former abductee children to reintegrate into school?

Aim 3: Assess the cost-effectiveness of a localised skill-targeted social-emotional activities intervention in non-formal school settings

- **Effectiveness Research**

- What is the impact of the skill-targeted social-emotional activities intervention on teachers' instructional practices, children's SEL and wellbeing and the quality of the school climate in non-formal learning schools?
 - How does the impact of the skill-targeted social-emotional activities vary for different types of students by age, gender, displacement status, disability status and region?
 - How does the impact vary for the instructional practices of teachers, by gender, age, education level and teaching experience?
- What levels of dosage, quality and fidelity of the intervention do we observe?
- How do differences in dosage, quality and fidelity of the implementation affect teacher and student level outcomes?
- Is the intervention cost-effective?

Aim 4. Adapt skill-targeted social-emotional activities for new settings such as the formal school system

- **Design Research**

- How might we adapt the skill-targeted social-emotional activities approach to the formal school context? What risk and protective factors do we need to consider in the adaptation of skill-targeted social-emotional activities to the formal school system?
- What skill-targeted social-emotional activities are needed to promote reintegration of displaced and former abductee children into formal and non-formal school settings?
- Which behavioural supports (or combination of supports) lead to the highest uptake and fidelity of use of skill-targeted social-emotional activities by teachers in formal and non-formal schools?

Table 4. Links to target system, drivers and outcomes in ERICC's conceptual framework, type of research needed, partner opportunities and tentative timeline

Number	1	2	3
Aims	Identify SEL values and needs in conflict affected settings and existing strategies to address these needs	Understand the perceptions of host community members towards those who are displaced and former abductees and identify strategies to facilitate their reintegration to school	Assess the cost-effectiveness of a localised skill-targeted social-emotional activity intervention in non-formal school settings
Target system	Local systems level in the community (parents, teachers, children, community leaders)	Local systems level in the community (parents, teachers, children, community leaders)	Non-formal school level (non-formal learning centres, learning facilitators, students)

Drivers	Access, quality, continuity	Access, Quality and Continuity	Quality
Outcomes	Equity in SEL and mental health	SEL and mental health	SEL and mental health
Research types	Formative research	Formative research	Effectiveness research

E. Research theme: programme sustainability

E.1. Background

During ERICC's country scan, KII and stakeholder workshops revealed that stakeholders value and want sustainable best practices and programs. They want to identify the factors that enable or hinder sustainability so that they can inform program design.

A review of the literature, however, showed a dearth of information on the sustainability of programs and best practices, or the factors that contribute to success or failure. For example, in 2005, Nigeria adopted a national policy to establish School-Based Management Committees (SBMCs) in state schools to allow communities an institutionalised vehicle to participate in school decision-making processes. Though in 2007 the government made the establishment of SBMCs mandatory, only a few schools successfully established long-lasting, functional SBMCs, mostly with support from donor agencies. This limited the potential innovation and sustainability benefits offered by community driven SBMCs. Research suggests that there has not been enough learning from community-supported schooling networks in many states in Nigeria. In addition there is no information on the factors that led some schools to successfully implement and sustain SBMCs, and other schools to fail in the attempt.

Though limited, evidence from successful programs point to multi-stakeholder partnerships as a driver for success. For example, the Education Crisis Response (ECR), a USAID funded project (2014 to 2017) provided formal education and psychosocial support through formal schools and non-formal learning centres for internally displaced and out of school children aged 6 to 17. The project's partnership model was amongst the reasons for its success. Technical working groups consisted of government officials, national and local NGOs and 67 community coalitions in 31 LGAs. Together they implemented early warning systems which leveraged cash and in-kind resources. While the ECR non-formal and tutoring interventions were not taken up by the government and ended at the end of USAID's funding, the ECR project built considerable capacity among the stakeholders involved. Implementing organisations were later able to integrate lessons learned and leverage the capacity built among actors in Northeast Nigeria to provide similar but refined interventions. These interventions have already proven to be cost-effective (Diazgranados et al, 2020) with funding from FCDO as part of the DFID Education in Emergencies Project in Yobe and Borno.

Although a limited number of studies have documented the impact and cost-effectiveness of education interventions in the northeast, there is a dearth of research documenting the degree to which impactful programs and best practices have been adopted or sustained beyond the funding period of a program, or the factors that facilitated or hindered their sustainability. Additionally, we did not find valid and reliable assessments to assess different types and levels of sustainability. Additional information is needed to identify education intervention programs that have been sustained over time in the northeast and the factors that have facilitated or inhibited sustainability. This information can be used to inform how sustainability strategies and elements can be integrated into new interventions.

E.2. Evidence Gap and Aims of Future Research

The following are gaps in evidence:

- Information on the elements of sustainability and on how local stakeholders involved in the education process in conflict and crisis settings in Nigeria understand and promote sustainability.
- Measurement tools that can be used to assess different levels and types of sustainability.
- Information on the degree to which different education programs in Nigeria have been able to achieve different levels of sustainability and the factors that contributed to success or failure.

To address these gaps, we propose conducting research studies (See Box 4 for detailed research questions) with the following aims:

- **Aim 1:** Identify how education stakeholders understand the elements that support different types and levels of sustainability of education programs beyond the funding period.
- **Aim 2:** Develop a measure to assess the sustainability of education programs in conflict and crisis settings.
- **Aim 3:** Assess the sustainability of education programs in Northeast Nigeria and the factors that enabled or hindered sustainability.

Box 5. Indicative research questions for research theme: programme sustainability

Aim 1. Identify how education stakeholders understand the elements that support different types and levels of sustainability of education programs beyond the funding period

- **Formative Research**

- How do education stakeholders in Northeast Nigeria understand and promote sustainability?
- What elements do stakeholders consider necessary for sustainability of education programs in conflict and crisis settings of Northeast Nigeria?

Aim 2: Develop a measure to assess the sustainability of education programs in conflict and crisis settings

- **Measurement research**

- How is sustainability defined and assessed? What types and levels of sustainability exist?
- How can we measure the sustainability of education programs in a feasible and user-friendly way?
- What evidence of validity and reliability exists for the measure designed?

Aim 3: Assess the sustainability of education programs in Northeast Nigeria and the factors that enabled or hindered sustainability

- **Implementation Research**

- To what degree have individual education programs in Northeast Nigeria achieved different levels of sustainability?
- How does the sustainability of programs vary by education setting (formal/non formal), level (ECD, primary, secondary, tertiary), objective (access, quality, continuity), target beneficiary (gender, disability status, displacement status, etc), region.

- What elements have inhibited or facilitated the different types and levels of sustainability of education programs in conflict and crisis settings in Northeast Nigeria?

E.3. Expected impact on education policy and programming

Findings from the research will be useful in programming and research, both in embedding the most critical elements of sustainability into intervention programmes, and for informing the design of practical measurement tools to assess sustainability in the future. The knowledge and tools derived from the study will have wide application beyond education and across a broader geographical setting than the northeast. We expect that they can be helpful to and adopted in other ERICC settings through a cross-regional measurement working group. Based on this emerging research priority, we are suggesting adding sustainability to ERICC's conceptual framework as an outcome at the Policy-systems level.

Table 5. Links to target system, drivers and outcomes in ERICC's conceptual framework, type of research needed, partner opportunities and tentative timeline

Number	1	2	3
Aims	Identify how education stakeholders understand the elements that support different types and levels of program sustainability beyond funding period to new interventions	Develop a measure to assess the sustainability of education programs in conflict and crisis settings	Assess the sustainability of education programs in Northeast Nigeria
Target system	Policy-systems level (MoE)	Policy-systems level	Policy-systems level
Drivers	Access, Quality, Continuity, Coherence,	Sustainability	Sustainability
Outcomes	Accountability and Alignment. We are requesting to include sustainability as an outcome in ERICC's conceptual framework,	Accountability. Requesting to consider sustainability as a systems-level outcome	Policies, budgets, accountability
Research types	Formative research	Formative research	Effectiveness research

IV. OTHER NON-PRIORITISED EVIDENCE GAPS

Stakeholders also considered other priorities besides the top five that were used to develop this research agenda. The following were included in the major concerns but did not make the top five list for improving access to education, quality and continuity of education in conflict and crisis-affected settings in Nigeria:

1. **Comprehensive and population data linked EMIS.** How can the Education Management Information System (EMIS) data system be complete and connected to population and other data systems to enable it to track entry and exit in and out of the school system?
2. **The extent of loss, displacement, and recovery.** More recent (disaggregated) estimates of damages and recovery costs, including education for displaced children. What is the estimated cost of damages, loss of students, teachers and school administrators displaced children?
3. **State of implementation of the recovery and peacebuilding assessment (RPBA).** What is the strategy for assessing the performance of the recovery and peacebuilding assessment?

V. RESEARCH, MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The co-constructed research agenda addresses critical issues concerning education in conflict and crisis-affected settings. The research agenda is underpinned by a realistic theory of change that links the production of evidence to shifts in policy and programmes. Settlements; accountability; cost-effective delivery; quality and learning; protection and inclusion (including a focus on girls' education); and data, monitoring and evaluation will inform the strategy for implementing the research agenda.

VI. RESEARCHING FOR IMPACT

For maximum impact on policy and practice, the research will be conducted using a six-stage participatory strategy with modifications to fit the specific research. The components of the stages are as follows:

1. **Engage.** The team will engage the primary end-users of the knowledge products, including FCDO and other relevant stakeholders. In doing so they will refine the research activities and define the conditions that will enable findings to be translated into policy to ensure education access, quality and continuity in conflict and crisis-affected settings.
2. **Select.** The research team will include the end users in preparing stakeholders to understand, accept and use the findings. Intensive stakeholder consultation and participation in the research process is critical towards the uptake of findings. In selecting participants from the stakeholder community, the team will pay attention to credibility, integrity, conflict of interest, and the balance between capacity strengthening, robustness of the methodology and useability of the evidence outcome.
3. **Design.** Although there will be broad consultation to appraise the context of the planned activities and situate the research design for purpose, the design is strictly within the research directorate's purview. The design depends on the research, its objectives, context, situation, and the use of the eventual product. The research will be independently developed, rigorously reviewed, and tailored to fit the purpose for which it will be used.
4. **Implement.** The data will be collected and analysed and a technical report of the findings will be written. This stage will involve different levels of stakeholder participation depending on the nature of data that is collected, analysed, and reported. Protocols for stakeholder engagement, quality assurance, integrity, and credibility of data will be included in the concept note.
5. **Reflect.** The research team will present findings to a larger stakeholder community (including the Local Government education secretaries) and encourage the end-users to interpret the evidence in context, and to develop plans for using it to close the identified gaps. The end users will primarily drive this stage while the research team will facilitate the process as well as encourage reflection on the findings, their meanings, and how to use the evidence to inform decision-making.

6. **Use.** The research team will facilitate the uptake and application of lessons learned into policy and implementation effectiveness and efficiency. This approach will depend on the lesson learned, the end-user, and the nature of user needs and resources. The research team's support will vary from reviewing documents (format, template), to providing guides, to conducting capacity strengthening workshops for using evidence.

VII. LIMITATIONS

The stakeholders identified and prioritised many concerns according to the impact, urgency, and likelihood of use in policy and practice. The country scan identified the problems that will be funded through ERICC and other issues that will need to be addressed through additional fund-raising and leveraging with other projects. The RRD and the in-country researchers, with FCDO input, identified indicative studies, the research sequence and the two themes that will commence in April 2023. The country team will continue to refine the process through the first quarter of 2023.

The team identified and will explore the following opportunities:

- Collaboration with research institutions and other ongoing projects for mutual benefits, as well as university faculties of education and partner organisations working on education.
- In the first quarter of 2023, the team will engage stakeholders during feedback and planning meetings to help identify and start conversations with potential funders. In addition, the team will aim that collaborators and potential funders attend the stakeholder feedback meeting.

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ABOUT ERICC

The Education Research in Conflict and Protracted Crisis (ERICC) Research Programme Consortium is a global research and learning partnership that strives to transform education policy and practice in conflict and protracted crisis around the world — ultimately to help improve holistic outcomes for children — through building a global hub for rigorous, context-relevant and actionable evidence base.

ERICC seeks to identify the most effective approaches for improving access, quality, and continuity of education to support sustainable and coherent education systems and holistic learning and development of children in conflict and crisis. ERICC aims to bridge research, practice, and policy with accessible and actionable knowledge — at local, national, regional and global levels — through co- construction of research and collaborative partnerships.

ERICC is led by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and expert partners include Centre for Lebanese Studies, Common Heritage Foundation, Forcier Consulting, ODI, Osman Consulting, Oxford Policy Management and Queen Rania Foundation. During ERICC's inception period, NYU-TIES provided research leadership, developed the original ERICC Conceptual Framework and contributed to early research agenda development. ERICC is supported by UK Aid.

Countries in focus include Bangladesh (Cox's Bazar), Jordan, Lebanon, Myanmar, Nigeria, South Sudan and Syria.