

2016 Mission Trip *continued*

dancing. Not even a torrential downpour during the festivities was able to put a damper on the excitement about the new school.

Over the course of the next week we traveled each day to a new town or village, including one hospital. At each we were warmly greeted by the community with festive welcoming ceremonies. There was even a marching band. The hospitality and graciousness of the people in each town we visited were overwhelming. We handed out our “gifts,” and the people were so grateful to receive even a single toiletry item. The dresses were especially popular! Working alongside local doctors, nurses and ophthalmologists, we did blood pressure and eyesight screenings, and distributed the medications and eyeglasses we brought.

The most rewarding activity we did at each location was interviewing the children who are hoping to be sponsored by BIZAA. Meeting them personally and hearing their stories was an experience I will never forget. There are so many who just want the simple opportunity to attend school instead of working--something we mostly take for granted here in America. It was impossible to decide which children were most deserving, because all of their stories were unique, compelling



4061 Jason Ave. NE
St. Michael, MN 55376-3060

and heart wrenching. It was equally touching to see Carl, Marci, and Lee meet their sponsored children, and hear about the amazing progress they’ve made since being sponsored by BIZAA. The letters and gifts we brought from current sponsors for their sponsored children were also greatly appreciated by them.

One of the biggest takeaways Bob and I had from the trip was seeing the impact that BIZAA sponsorships have had on the children’s emotional, spiritual and educational development. The children we interviewed who are hoping to get into the program were often shy and timid. The ones who’ve been sponsored for at least a year were confident, courteous, well-spoken, and extremely grateful. You could sense that they now believed that their dreams for the future were becoming a reality.

This was clearly the most impactful “vacation” I’d ever been on. I would strongly recommend it to others who have both a sense of adventure and a desire to help others.

We departed Nigeria wishing we could help each and every one of the children, and it seems overwhelming to think about all of them who could use BIZAA’s help. But I remind myself of the words of Edward Hale, who said, “I cannot do everything, but I can do something. And I will not let what I cannot do, interfere with what I can do.”

Since the trip, we’ve decided to sponsor two children, and I can’t wait to see the impact that BIZAA will have on them. My hope is that others, who are able to do so, will consider being the answer to the prayers of just one child in need.

Make a Difference NOW in a Child’s Life!

- Yes**, I would like to donate to BIZAA. I’ve enclosed \$_____.
- Yes**, I would like to sponsor a child, please contact me.
- Yes**, My business or organization would like to donate to BIZAA, please contact us.
- Yes**, I would like to become a BIZAA volunteer, please contact me.
- Yes**, I would like to receive your newsletter.
- Yes**, I would love to host an African Wine Tasting for BIZAA, call me!

Name: _____

Business or Organization _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please make checks out to BIZAA and mail to: BIZAA, 4061 Jason Avenue North, St. Michael, MN 55376-3060. Thank you!

Newsletter design and layout by Linden Design and Partners Image Coordinators.

Our Success Story

BIZAA College of Technology and Nursing in Imo State, Nigeria is Now Open!

The BIZAA College of Technology and Nursing was officially opened on June 12, 2017, during our mission trip to Nigeria. The opening was a grand celebration and community affair with a ribbon cutting, music, dancing, and speeches. In attendance were mission-trip attendees, local kings, clergymen, clergywomen, BIZAA staff, and all BIZAA sponsored children.

The students began their school year on September 19, 2016. The curriculum this year is focused on learning computer skills. Curriculums in subsequent years

will focus on the students' chosen trades. The offered trades will be electrical, tailoring, building construction, plumbing, mechanical engineering, carpentry and joinery, welding and fabrication.

Upon completion of the trade courses, students will take a certification test. After passing, the students will be eligible for employment. Completed courses will also be eligible for college credit, so that students will have the option to transfer to a university.



BIZAA College of Technology

2016 Mission Trip *By Terry Provo*

My husband Bob and I joined St. Vincent DePaul parish in December. After reading a notice in the bulletin about the upcoming 10-day mission trip I was intrigued and wanted to learn more. I have always wanted to travel to Africa and go on a mission trip, so this seemed like the perfect opportunity to combine both and learn more about BIZAA. After an introductory phone call to Okey, I was convinced. I wanted to see if I could persuade my husband to go with me! Thankfully, he agreed and we set off with our new friends: Okey, Father Paul, Carl, Lee, Marci and Rachel.

We met a couple nights before our

departure for the "packing party," where we sorted and loaded up large suitcases full of donated treasures: health and beauty supplies, toiletries, eyeglasses, shoes, and gorgeous dresses made by the women of the parish. In total, our group headed off to Nigeria with 40 bags and suitcases weighing over 1800 pounds. The Delta agent was not exactly excited to see us when we arrived!

The flights from Minneapolis to Atlanta, and then to Lagos, Nigeria took 16 hours. Okey had thankfully pre-arranged a contingent to meet us and transport all of us and our supplies to a diocesan retreat center with comfortable

accommodations. We spent the night there before heading off the next day for the 8-hour drive in a van to Omuma in Imo State.

The mission part of the trip began with a celebratory mass at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Omuma. Most of the sponsored children attended, and there was amazing music and singing. After mass there was a large and colorful procession through the streets to the newly established BIZAA College of Technology and Nursing. A ribbon-cutting ceremony marked the official opening of the school, and was followed by facility tours with more singing and

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From the Founder's Desk

Okey Anyanwu, BIZAA Founder and President

okey@biza.org

Dear Friends,

"This building will remain a monument of Hope for our community, because for the first time in this town, access to education and the assurance of a bright future have been made possible for the less privileged among us. May the God of our fathers bless Okey's American friends."

These were the words of one of the kings, who delivered a vote of thanks at the inauguration of BIZAA College of Technology and Nursing in Imo State, Nigeria during our last mission trip. His words capture the spirit behind this edition of our BIZAA Bulletin. A spirit of gratitude and fruitfulness that stems from BIZAA's measurable success within this past year -thanks to our relentless team of volunteers and generous supporters.

Ours is a great success story, because between September 2013 and September 2016, BIZAA has identified 200 victims of child labor and child trafficking in Southeastern Nigeria, and 112 of these children have been successfully enrolled in school. At the BIZAA College of Technology and Nursing, which opened last June, we are working towards adding more trades to the founding department of Computer Engineering. Our vision is to keep fine-tuning our curriculum to reflect our commitment to self-reliance, academic excellence, guaranteed placement and discipline. We are well on our way to become the first certifiably functional tertiary institution accessible to victims of child labor and child traffic in Nigeria. However, the task ahead of us is enormous,

because there are 61 million out-of-school children globally. As studies have shown, one in six of these children worldwide, and one in three in Sub-Saharan Africa, is Nigerian. What a shame! As the visionary for our young organization, I cannot boast of having all the right answers, but I know that the status quo is simply unacceptable.

Be that as it may, BIZAA's fruitfulness so far is quite evident in the transformative impact our mission trips have had on individual participants and the great sense of hope and gratitude in the communities we serve. It has been a "labor of love" and certainly that attracted the admiration of a Producer and Grammy-nominee, Rachel Nee-Hall, who followed us to Nigeria last June, and has produced a classic documentary titled, "The Boy They Called Bizare". Have you seen that one-hour powerful documentary?

We are equally proud to announce that another professional, Bre McGee, a photo-journalist, who has worked with Star Tribune, Boston Globe, etc., has volunteered to join our mission trip that is scheduled for May 18 through May 28, 2017. Consider coming with us, as we have already filled five of the ten openings for the trip.

May I sincerely thank you again for your continued support, as we keep moving African children from the streets to classrooms to make our world a better place for generations to come.

I am a grateful heart!

— Okey Anyanwu, Founder

Upcoming BIZAA Events

Complimentary Screening of BIZAA Documentary "The Boy They Called Bizarre"
St. Mary of the Lake Catholic Church, Plymouth, MN
Sunday, December 4, 2016 • 6:30 – 8:00pm

BIZAA Appreciation Weekend
St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, April 8/9, 2017 at all Masses

BIZAA 5th Annual Mission Trip to Nigeria,
May 18 – 28, 2017

Bargains & Beyond (Rummage Sale)
Late Spring 2017

BIZAA Planing Committee Meetings
Every 3rd Thursday of the month at Maple Grove Library



2016 Mission Trip Participants about to take off from Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport. From far left: Carl, Fr Paul, Marci, Lee, Okey, Bob, Terry and Rachel

Check out our new website at www.BIZAA.org,
like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter @bizaorg.



Bargains & Beyond 2016 by Betty Bartos, Coordinator of Bargains & Beyond

Bargains & Beyond 2016, St. Vincent de Paul's parish rummage sale, was truly a blessed event. The Holy Spirit produced a miracle of volunteers, donors, and customers. Over 420 people offered an excess of 2,500 hours of labor over a six-month period of time. We smiled, we laughed, we worked. We even shed tears, when our **BIZAA** mission-trip participants called from Nigeria to wish us luck and send their prayers.

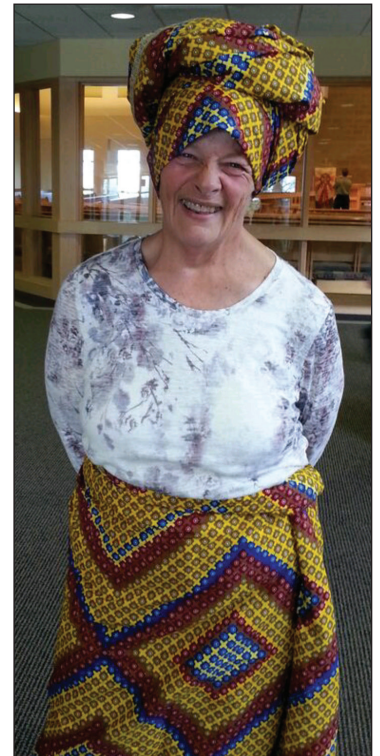
With sale merchandise in place, and before the sale officially opened to the public, various local groups and individuals were invited to take items for their causes. Our parish outreach ministers were asked to keep local needs in mind. The parish bazaar committee, our parish school, and the after-school programs were all encouraged to find items they could use. "For the last several years, Royal Kids has been able to shop the sale prior to its opening to the public. We have received games, craft items, and toys at no cost to our program. We are so appreciative of the generosity of Bargains & Beyond," commented the after-school program leader. Womensource also sent a note "to thank Bargains & Beyond for thinking of us each year and donating baby items that can be given to women and families in need." Operation Christmas Child and Midwest Animal Rescue Services were encouraged to select items for their charitable causes.

Several individuals were especially pleased to find useful items at the sale. A person traveling to Cuba asked for belts and scarves to take on their mission trip. Another person was sending a crate of clothing to her village in Puerto Rico. A teacher from a local school needed sporting equipment for the needy children he coached. A parish volunteer offered, "At the parish sale, I purchased many pieces of fabric. I will be using the fabric to make clothing, such as nightgowns, sleepers, business casual wear, and other outfits. These items will then be donated to Avenues for Homeless Youth in Minneapolis, Robbinsdale Women's Center, Bundles of Love, and Womensource. I much appreciated being able to purchase so much material at a low cost."

In spite of our very low prices and numerous customers, we still had items that remained at the closing of the sale. That is when St. Vincent de Paul Society, Good Will, and Cross of Glory Church came to take things for their usage. "I like the title for the sale. The beyond is really true when I realize how many people benefit from the donations. I think we need to help all people, close and far away," stated a non-parishioner who volunteered at the sale.

The monetary proceeds of the rummage sale were given to **BIZAA**, our parish international outreach program that rescues Nigerian child laborers and trafficked children and places them into accredited schools. Our pastor Fr. Paul Treacy, several parishioners, and the founder of **BIZAA** (one of our pastoral ministers) were actually in Nigeria during the sale to be with our rescued children.

When we think about the many benefits of this sale, one large group of beneficiaries is often overlooked, our volunteers. Ask most volunteers why they return day after day, year after year, to work the sale, they often reply, "We work hard! We have fun! We offer a tremendous service to our parish faith community, to the local community, to many communities far away. **And we are able to provide much-needed funds for our parish international outreach program, BIZAA!**"

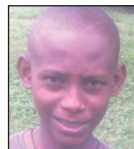


Sue Barry-Hagen posing in African regalia during BIZAA appreciation weekend at Advent Lutheran Church, Maple Grove, MN

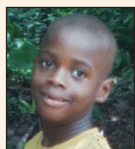
BIZAA Sponsorship Opportunities

Primary School Students

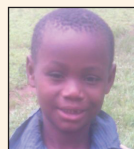
Tuition	\$450/yr
Student's Welfare	\$150/yr
Parent/Guardian's Micro-Loan	\$100/yr
Sponsorship Total / Year	\$700 / yr



Name: Christian
Date of Birth/Age: 10 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Sells oranges in the village market. He wants to be a soldier.



Name: Edmond
Date of Birth/Age: 8 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Has been a child laborer for 18 months



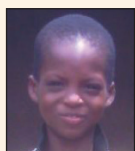
Name: Emmanuel
Date of Birth/Age: 9 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Has been in domestic servitude for one year



Name: Malachy
Date of Birth/Age: July 5, 2005
Gender: Male
Bio: Parents alive. He sells rice.



Name: Nelson
Date of Birth/Age: 9 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Has been a child laborer for one year



Name: Prince
Date of Birth/Age: 7 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Lives with grandma and works in the family farm



Name: Prosper
Date of Birth/Age: 11 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Has been in domestic servitude for 2 years



Name: Vivian
Date of Birth/Age: July 6, 2003
Gender: Male
Bio: Manual Laborer. Dropped out in Primary

Secondary School Students

Tuition	\$600/yr
Student's Welfare	\$200/yr
Parent/Guardian's Micro-Loan	\$100/yr
Sponsorship Total / Year	\$900 / yr



Name: Chinyere E.
Date of Birth/Age: 13 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Went missing and found after 4 months while being held by traffickers



Name: Consolata
Date of Birth/Age: 13 years old
Gender: Female
Bio: Escaped from domestic servitude, due to abuse by host family.



Name: Cynthia A.
Date of Birth/Age: 17 years old
Gender: Female
Bio: Fractured her leg in an accident, while working on the streets as a child laborer.



Name: Daniel U.
Date of Birth/Age: 15 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Has been in domestic servitude for 4 years



Name: Favour E.
Date of Birth/Age: 14 years old
Gender: Female
Bio: Have been in domestic servitude for 2 years



Name: Henry N.
Date of Birth/Age: 13 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Works in family farm



Name: Jessica A.
Date of Birth/Age: 18 years old
Gender: Female
Bio: Has been working on the streets for 3 years

Sponsors are still needed for the 2016–2017 academic year!

Secondary School Students



Name: Miracle U.
Date of Birth/Age: 14 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Has been a manual laborer in the village for 2 years



Name: Mmesoma O.
Date of Birth/Age: 13 years old
Gender: Female
Bio: Rescued domestic servitude after one year



Name: Promise O.
Date of Birth/Age: 15 years
Gender: Male
Bio: Has been a child laborer for 2 years

Post-Secondary (Vocational) School Students

Tuition	\$1,650/yr
Student's Welfare	\$250/yr
Parent/Guardian's Micro-Loan	\$100/yr
Sponsorship Total / Year	\$2,000 / yr



Name: Assumpta
Date of Birth/Age: 19 years old
Gender: Female
Bio: Hair braider, and manual laborer for 4 years.



Name: Chidera
Date of Birth/Age: August 4, 1993
Gender: Male
Bio: Mother is alive father is dead, 3rd of 5 children.



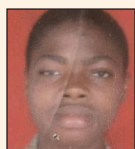
Name: Chukwuebuka
Date of Birth/Age: 19 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Uses wheel barrow to deliver people's goods in the local market.



Name: Chukwunonso
Date of Birth/Age: 21 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Dropped out of school at the age of 16 to help raise younger ones.



Name: Favour
Date of Birth/Age: 19 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Dropped out of school 3 years ago, and became a manual laborer.



Name: Mmachukwu
Date of Birth/Age: 19 years old
Gender: Female
Bio: Dropped out of school 2 years ago and went into domestic servitude to help her widowed mom.



Name: Obi
Date of Birth/Age: 22 years old
Gender: Female
Bio: Has been working in the family farm for 5 years to help raise his younger siblings



Name: Peace
Date of Birth/Age: June 11, 1998
Gender: Female
Bio: She sells vegetables in the village market to help mom.



Name: Samuel
Date of Birth/Age: 19 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Manual laborer and bread-winner for a family of 5.



Name: Samuel
Date of Birth/Age: 20 years old
Gender: Male
Bio: Works as a janitor in a palm oil outlet

**If you feel called to help these children,
please email Okey at okey@biza.org for more information.**

Carefully Charting our Future

by Mike Majerus, BIZAA Team Member and Child Sponsor

Dear Friends and Benefactors of BIZAA,

As we enter the first few months of another exciting BIZAA year, we wanted to update you on some key points of interest.

Last spring, the BIZAA Board of Directors began to embark on a strategic planning process through the assistance of SCORE. SCORE is a nonprofit association dedicated to helping small businesses get off the ground, grow and achieve their goals through education and mentorship. Through this process, we have begun to define and assess our perceived strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. With the tremendous growth BIZAA is experiencing, it is essential for us to be proactive in planning for the future, and this effort will help us to focus on our goals through the lens of our strengths.

In order to bolster our positions of strength, we have added more people to our planning committee. Our growing list dedicated and talented volunteers are transforming this organization, offering expertise and experience that position us well for long-term sustainability.

Responsible Stewardship

The strategic planning process reaffirmed the necessity created by our growth to continually reassess the financial metrics required to sustain a healthy organization. Part of that assessment includes the review of our sponsorship levels relative to the actual cost of the program. We have not had an increase to our sponsorship levels since we started in 2013, and many have commented about how inexpensive it is to sponsor a child in our program. That is because the sponsorship commitment does not cover the full cost of the program, particularly for vocational college level, so we have had to allocate funds earmarked for general operating costs to subsidize the sponsorships. With the growth we're experiencing (112 children rescued from the streets and moved into classrooms to date), this is not sustainable long-term. Consequently, the Board has recommended the following changes to the sponsorship levels effective 11/1/2016 for incoming sponsors:

Primary School Level	\$700
Secondary School Level	\$900
Vocational School Level	\$2000

Please, note that these new rates will ONLY be applicable to current sponsor UPON THE RENEWAL of their current

routine two year commitment. These new levels will also sustain our scholarship program and enable us to focus additional funding resources on our long-term vision of building our own schools to accelerate the transformation of communities and our impact on the world.

Expanding our Reach

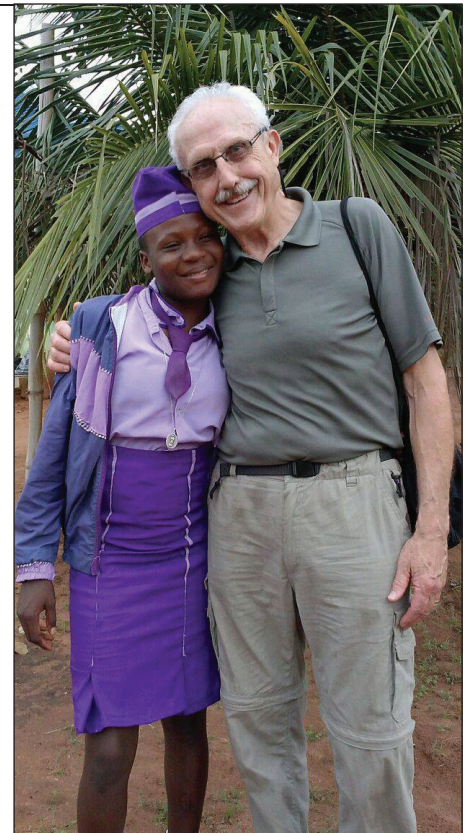
The strategic planning process is also helping us to build a model for continued growth by creating action plans for taking our story and our mission to the masses. Because our local grassroots efforts have yielded much fruit, we are buoyed with confidence that this mission will resonate with a broader audience. Beginning with the airing of our documentary by renowned Emmy nominated documentary producer, Rachel Nee Hall in early November, and continuing with our annual Gala, we've begun to build a long range marketing and public relations campaign that will expand our reach and expose the BIZAA name not only to more individuals, but also to charitable foundations that may be able to impact our mission in a meaningful way.

Commitment to our Mission

As a vested partner of BIZAA, you know we are committed to changing the world through education, one child at a time. This is a lofty goal in and of itself, but we are focusing on the most vulnerable and destitute children in the world, literally taking them off the streets and into the classroom.

We are grateful for your continued support and partnership as you entrust your financial resources to transform the lives of children and give them a future of hope.

We are truly blessed.



Lee Halbur with sponsored child.



A cross-section of BIZAA Vocational Students in the classroom

Celebrating the safe arrival of Marcel and Martin



Nigerian goat donated to mission trip participants by one of the communities



Rachel showing Uchechi a video greeting from her sponsor Sue



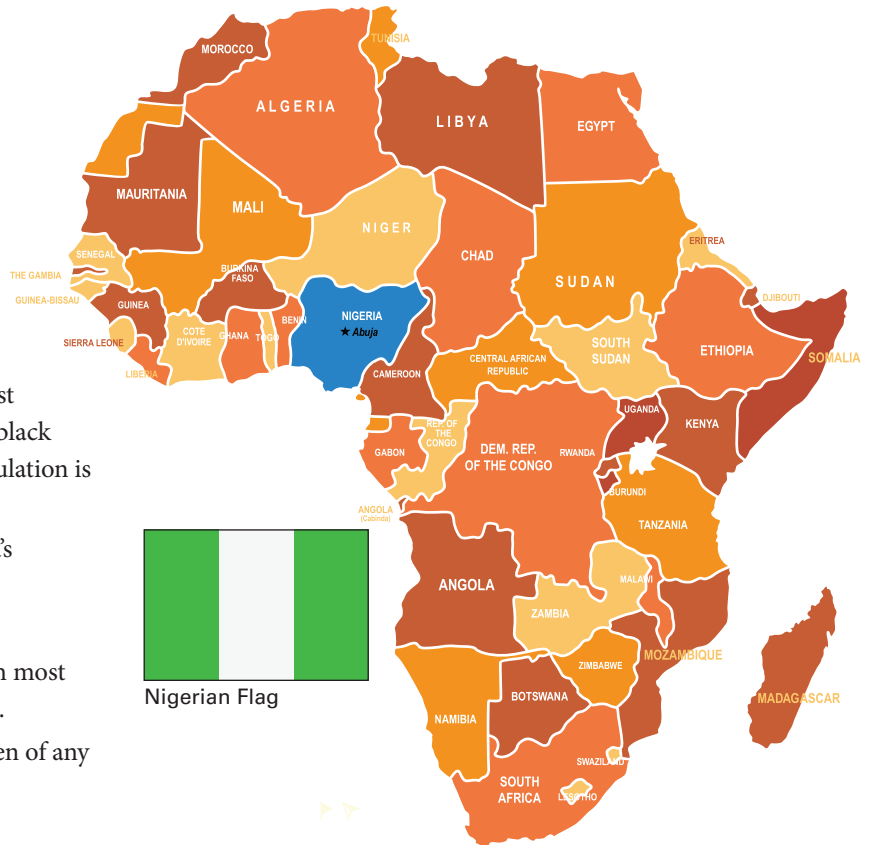
Mission Trip participants and BIZAA Nigerian staff around the dining table



Father Paul leading prayer during the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the inauguration of BIZAA College of Technology and Nursing

About Nigeria *by Marci Siers*

- Official name is the Federal Republic of Nigeria.
- It has been a democracy since 1999.
- Current president is Muhammadu Buhari, who was elected in March, 2015.
- The capital is Abuja.
- Nigeria has the biggest economy in Africa.
- Current population is approximately 180 million, with the potential to double by 2035. Nigeria is the most populated country in Africa, and is the most populous black nation in the world. Approximately 40-50% of the population is 18 years of age or younger.
- Nigeria is about twice the size of California, but Nigeria's population is four and one half times that of California.
- The official language is English.
- The two major religions are Christianity and Islam, with most Christians in the south, and most Muslims in the north.
- Nigeria has the highest number of out-of-school children of any country in the world.
- Poverty rate is approximately 70%.



Nigerian Flag