

REPORT



# Education Policy Commission General Assembly

Friday, 7th March 2025 | 10:00AM

📍 Virtual



# 2025 General Assembly Report

## Education Policy Commission

<p><b>Date:</b> Friday, March 7, 2025</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 10 am</p> <p><b>Duration:</b> 2 hours</p> <p><b>Venue:</b> Virtual</p>	<p><b>EDUCATION POLICY COMMISSION GENERAL ASSEMBLY</b></p> <p><b>Details of Discussants:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ms Molade Adeniyi, Thematic Lead TVET</b></li><li>• <b>Mr Godwin Henry, Thematic Lead, Basic Education</b></li><li>• <b>Mrs Irene Bangwell, Technical Anchor, EdPC</b></li><li>• <b>Dr Detoun Ogwo, Facilitator, Education Policy Commission (EdPC)</b></li></ul> <p>• <b><u>Moderated by:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Ms Molade Adeniyi, Thematic Lead TVET</b></li></ul>
<p><b>Background</b></p>	<p>The Education Policy Commission is a platform within the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) that fosters innovative, effective educational policies and sustains economic growth. Its mission is to drive transformative change in education by developing and advocating for progressive policies that enhance access, quality, and inclusivity in Nigeria's education sector.</p> <p>The Policy Commission's overarching objective is to facilitate the adoption of the various NES recommendations on improving education and human capital to promote growth and development.</p> <p>The Education Policy Commission is dedicated to spearheading transformative reforms in the Nigerian education sector. It is organised around three core thematic areas, each focusing on reshaping and improving different aspects of education in the country.</p>
<p><b>Context</b></p>	<p>The Education Policy Commission (EdPC) of the NESG drives evidence-based policy reforms in Nigeria's education sector through multi-stakeholder engagement. The General Assembly was held to review the 2025 Work Plan and Policy Change Roadmap, discuss key education policy issues, strengthen collaboration among thematic groups, and identify actionable steps to enhance policy influence and implementation.</p> <p>The General Assembly served as a platform to engage its members, review ongoing initiatives, and refine strategic action plans for the year.</p>

## Session Report

### Opening Remarks

**Mr Godwin Henry,  
Thematic Lead, Basic  
Education**

Mr Godwin opened the opening remarks for the Education Policy Commission General Assembly by welcoming all participants warmly and enthusiastically. He expressed genuine excitement to see so many individuals coming together, united by a shared commitment to improving education in Nigeria.

He then extended a special welcome to returning volunteers, whom they affectionately referred to as “legendary volunteers,” and those joining the commission for the first time. He reassured new participants that they were stepping in at the perfect time, as this was the first significant engagement of the year, and they had not missed any critical activities.

Mr Godwin emphasised the importance of having knowledgeable and engaged stakeholders in the room, noting that while everyone feels they have an opinion on education, the expertise and dedication of those actively involved in the sector genuinely drive meaningful change.

The Education Policy Commission was introduced as a multi-stakeholder platform under the Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG), dedicated to driving evidence-based policy advocacy and reforms across Nigeria’s education system. The commission’s work spans many areas, including basic education, technical and vocational training (TVET), workforce development, and more.

Mr Godwin highlighted that the commission’s mission is to address critical challenges in the education sector and to advocate for policies that promote inclusivity, quality, and sustainability. A more detailed presentation later in the assembly would provide further insights into how the commission operates and the specific goals it aims to achieve.

Mr Godwin then turned to the work plan for 2025, explaining that it had been shaped by the valuable input and ideas submitted by participants earlier in the year. While every suggestion was essential and urgent, He acknowledged that not all ideas could be included in this year’s plan due to practical constraints.

However, he assured participants that all ideas were stored in an “idea bank” and would be revisited as the commission progresses in its work. This approach ensures that no contribution is overlooked and that the commission remains responsive to the evolving needs of Nigeria’s education system.

## Session Report

<p><b>Opening Remarks</b></p> <p><b>Mr Godwin Henry, Thematic Lead, Basic Education</b></p>	<p>Mr Godwin explained that a key feature of the General Assembly would be the breakout sessions, where participants would divide into thematic groups such as basic education, TVET, and others. These sessions would allow deeper discussions, allowing participants to collaboratively review ongoing initiatives, refine strategies, and decide on the practical steps needed to implement the priorities identified for the year. He emphasized that the success of these discussions would depend heavily on the expertise, insights, and active participation of everyone in the room. He encouraged participants to engage fully in these sessions, as their contributions would be critical to shaping the commission's work and ensuring its impact.</p> <p>In closing, Mr Godwin thanked participants for their involvement and expressed optimism for a productive and inspiring General Assembly. He encouraged everyone to approach the day's discussions with enthusiasm and a collaborative spirit, reminding them that their work together has the potential to impact the lives of Nigerian children and the country's future. With that, Mr Godwin wished everyone a successful and impactful General Assembly, setting a positive tone for the day's proceedings.</p>
<p><b>Presentation by Think Tank Operations</b></p> <p><b>Mr Stephen Daniel, Think Tank Operations, NESG</b></p>	<p>Mr Stephen began by welcoming everyone to the Education Policy Commission General Assembly and introducing the Mandate, Strategy, and the Future of Advocacy presentation. He referenced a guiding quote by Kingdon (1984), emphasising that policy change and impact occur when three streams of problems, politics, and policies converge. This convergence does not happen by chance but through consistent and sustained advocacy. He stressed the importance of intentional efforts to align the identified problems in education, the political landscape, and the policies needed to drive meaningful change in the sector.</p> <p>The Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG) 's vision was highlighted as becoming Africa's leading private sector think tank, committed to developing a modern, globally competitive, and inclusive Nigerian economy. Its mission is to promote economic reforms that create an open, sustainable, and globally competitive economy. Eight (8) core principles guide the NESG.</p> <p>Values, including ethical business practices, good governance, private sector investment, and equitable income distribution. These values reflect the group's dedication to social and economic inclusion, shared prosperity, and the rule of law, all aimed at benefiting the Nigerian people.</p>

# Session Report

## Presentation by Think Tank Operations

Mr Stephen Daniel,  
Think Tank  
Operations, NESG

The NESG operates through four strategic roles:

- **Dialogue partner:** The NESG facilitates public-private dialogues to drive policy change and decision-making.
- **Connector:** builds networks and influences relationships between government, businesses, and citizens to ensure policies are implemented.
- **Accountability partner:** uses research and scorecards to monitor policy performance and advocate for evidence-based solutions.
- **Intervener:** the NESG ensures that policies are implemented effectively and monitors their impact.

The structure of the NESG includes six policy commissions, two business roundtables, a special task force on climate action, an expert forum, and two communities of practice. The Education Policy Commission, one of the six, serves as a multi-stakeholder platform to drive evidence-based policy advocacy and reform in the education sector.

The Education Policy Commission is divided into five thematic working groups: **basic education, technical and vocational education (TVET), workforce development, tertiary education, and out-of-school children**. The governance structure includes a steering committee, a working committee, thematic leads, and technical anchors working together to guide the commission's activities.

Policy commissions operate in three phases: pre-summit, summit, and post-summit, with the annual Nigerian Economic Summit serving as the flagship event where government commitments are made. Each commission produces outputs such as policy briefs, opinion pieces, and outreach materials, while also engaging in monitoring and evaluation to track progress.

The NESG's work is guided by public-private dialog (PPD) principles, which emphasise open governance, stakeholder engagement, and sustainability. However, Mr Stephen acknowledged risks such as vested interests, politicisation, and duplication of efforts, which the NESG has worked to mitigate over its 31-year history.

In closing, Mr Stephen encouraged those who had not yet joined the policy commission to sign up and volunteer, emphasising the importance of collective efforts in driving national progress.



## Session Report

### About the Education Policy Commission and objectives of our work plan 2025-2027.

Mrs Irene Bagwell,  
Technical Anchor,  
Education Policy  
Commission (EdPC)

Mrs Irene began by expressing gratitude to all participants for joining the General Assembly, emphasising that their contributions earlier in the year had shaped the discussions and priorities for the event. She acknowledged that while not every suggestion could be included in the current work plan, all ideas were carefully considered and would continue to inform the commission's efforts. She then provided an overview of the Education Policy Commission's role as a multi-stakeholder platform that drives evidence-based policy dialogue, advocacy, and reforms to improve Nigeria's education system. By bringing together public and private sector actors, civil society, and development partners, the commission aims to address critical challenges and advance sustainable policy reforms, aiming to improve the quality of education accessible to Nigerian children.

Mrs Irene outlined the commission's two-year work plan (2025–2027), focusing on two priority areas: **compulsory and inclusive basic education, and strengthening the regulatory environment for technical and vocational education and training (TVET)**. For basic education, the plan includes reviewing the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act to identify gaps and propose legislative improvements, engaging stakeholders to ensure inclusivity, and collaborating with state-level agencies to enhance implementation and monitoring. TVET focuses on harmonizing existing policies and frameworks, evaluating ongoing initiatives to align them with industry needs, and improving industry linkages through skills assessment, curriculum alignment, and employer engagement. These efforts aim to ensure that TVET programs equip youths with the skills demanded by the workforce.

In addition to these priorities, the commission will undertake cross-cutting initiatives, such as conducting a comprehensive workforce skills gap analysis, aligning secondary and tertiary education curricula with industry needs, and establishing a policy framework for employer participation in education and workforce development. These initiatives aim to bridge the gap between education and employment, ensuring that young people are prepared to contribute effectively. Ms Irene emphasized the importance of stakeholder engagement, monitoring, and evaluation to ensure accountability and alignment with national education goals and global best practices.

Mrs Irene encouraged participants to actively engage in the breakout sessions for more detailed discussions on the thematic groups. She highlighted the importance of collaboration and shared insights to create a comprehensive and actionable work plan. The commission's efforts aim to transform Nigeria's education system into one that is inclusive, skills-driven, and globally competitive. She again thanked participants for their involvement and urged them to prepare for the next phase of the General Assembly, setting the stage for productive and impactful discussions.

# Session Report

## Basic Education Breakout Session

moderated by  
Mr Godwin Henry,  
Thematic Lead, Basic  
Education

### Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act Review

Mr Godwin Henry opened the discussion by emphasising the importance of revisiting the UBE Act, which was initially designed to increase school enrollment. While the Act has succeeded in improving access to education, the quality of education remains a significant concern. He pointed out that the current implementation of the UBE Act is weak at the state level, leading to an increasing number of out-of-school children. The funding mechanism for UBE was also identified as a critical issue, with states required to provide counterpart funding, which many cannot meet due to financial constraints and insecurity.

A member of the Basic Education thematic group echoed these concerns, stating that the UBE Act is "out of touch with reality." The speaker highlighted the unrealistic counterpart funding requirements, especially in states facing security challenges like Benue, Plateau, and Kaduna. Additionally, the Act's provisions, such as fines for child hawking, are outdated and do not address the current realities of Nigeria's education system. The speaker emphasised the need for a significant amendment to the UBE Act to align it with the present challenges, particularly in ensuring quality education.

### Quality of Education

Concerns were raised about the quality of education in public schools, particularly in the North Central region. The speaker shared alarming observations, such as primary six students being unable to recognise letters of the alphabet, indicating a severe lack of foundational learning. This highlights the need to focus on quality education, not just access. Mrs Irene supported this view, emphasising that access to education is meaningless if learning is not meaningful. She referenced a pilot review on Nigeria's learning gap, revealing appalling results. The need to address the learning gap and ensure that children are not only in school but also receiving quality education was a recurring theme throughout the discussion.

### National Curriculum Conference

One of the participants proposed that the Ministry of Education should consider organising a national curriculum conference to review the Universal Basic Policy of Nigeria. He mentioned the first one was organised in Nigeria since 1969. He argued that the current curriculum is outdated, citing an example of a telecommunications engineering curriculum that included obsolete programming languages like Fortran. He also stressed the need for a comprehensive review of the national curriculum to ensure it meets modern standards in the era of artificial intelligence and rapid technological advancements. The proposed conference would involve various stakeholders to map out a new curriculum and set minimum standards for all levels of education.

# Session Report

## Basic Education Breakout Session

moderated by  
Mr Godwin Henry,  
Thematic Lead,  
Basic Education

### Role of Non-State Actors in Education

A participant, Ms Lanre, highlighted the importance of recognising the role of non-state actors in providing education, especially in areas where public schools are absent or inadequate. She noted that the Federal Ministry of Education has approved a non-state education policy, which must now be domesticated at the state level. However, the current UBE Act does not allow UBE funds to support non-state education, which is a significant barrier. Ms. Lanre recommended a "handshake" between the UBE Act and non-state education providers, where the government could support non-state schools with materials, teacher training, and other resources to ensure quality education in underserved communities.

### Recommendations

- **Review and Amend the UBE Act**
  - Conduct a comprehensive internal gap review of the UBE Act to identify areas that need amendment.
  - Address the unrealistic counterpart funding requirements, especially for states facing security and financial challenges.
  - Update provisions related to child labour and other outdated policies to reflect current realities.
- **Focus on Quality Education**
  - Implement measures to ensure that children have access to education and receive quality education.
  - Address the learning gap by improving primary schools' foundational literacy and numeracy skills.
- **Organise a National Curriculum Conference**
  - Convene a national curriculum conference to review and update the educational curriculum, ensuring it aligns with modern technological and societal needs.
  - Involve stakeholders from various sectors, including the private sector, to develop a curriculum that prepares students for the future.
- **Support Non-State Education Providers**
  - Encourage states to adopt and domesticate the non-state education policy.
  - Allow UBE funds to support non-state education providers in areas where public schools are absent or inadequate.
  - Provide resources such as school materials and teacher training to non-state schools to ensure quality education.
- **Government and Private Sector Collaboration**
  - Advocate for stronger government and private sector collaboration in driving educational reforms.
  - Ensure that government policies support and regulate non-state education providers without stifling their contributions.



# Session Report

## Breakout Session TVET

Ms Molade Adeniyi,  
Thematic Lead TVET

### **Decentralisation of AI and STEM Education**

A member of the TVET thematic group, Mr Kelvin, opened the discussion by emphasising the need to decentralize AI and STEM education in Nigeria. He suggested that by making AI and deep tech education more accessible, young Nigerians could begin to earn foreign currencies, similar to the Indian model. This would require a shift in focus from traditional education models to more modern, technology-driven approaches.

### **Technical and Vocational Education and Training**

Mr Adesina emphasised the importance of regulatory backing for TVET programs to ensure that the skills acquired are comparable to those from polytechnics or universities. He also highlighted the need for partnerships with schools, certification bodies, and industry players to ensure that TVET graduates have the necessary skills for the job market. The dual training system, which combines classroom learning with hands-on industry experience, was praised as a model that could be scaled across Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

#### **• Decentralise AI and STEM Education:**

- Develop programs to make AI and STEM education more accessible to young Nigerians, particularly in underserved areas.
- Encourage the adoption of modern technologies and deep tech education to prepare students for the global economy.

#### **2. Strengthen TVET Programmes:**

- Provide regulatory backing for TVET programs to ensure standardisation and quality.
- Promote dual training models that combine classroom learning with hands-on industry experience.
- Encourage partnerships between TVET institutions, certification bodies, and industry players to enhance the employability of graduates.

#### **3. Enhance Stakeholder Collaboration:**

- Ensure that all policy discussions and decisions involve relevant government and industry stakeholders.
- Foster a collaborative environment where all parties contribute to developing and designing education policies.

#### **4. Strengthen Monitoring and Evaluation:**

- Develop frameworks to track the progress and impact of policy recommendations.
- Ensure all initiatives align with national education goals and global best practices.

# Session Report

## Q and A Session

**Ms Molade Adeniyi,  
Thematic Lead TVET**

**Does the Senior Secondary School (SS1 to SS3) component fall within the scope of the Policy Commission's work? Basic education covers Primary One to Junior Secondary School (JSS) Three. If the focus remains only on primary one to JSS three, and TVET is being addressed separately, it raises concerns about whether the Senior Secondary School component is being overlooked. Could the basic education team confirm whether Senior Secondary School falls within their scope of work?**

Mr. Henry answered the question by affirming that Senior Secondary School (SS1 to SS3) is considered in their discussions. However, he emphasised that their operations are currently bound by the existing legal framework, which defines basic education as extending from Primary One to Junior Secondary School (JSS3). Despite this limitation, he noted ongoing conversations about expanding the definition of basic education to include the senior secondary level. This discussion forms part of a broader review of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Act. While the importance of Senior Secondary School is well recognised, all actions must align with the current legal provisions. Nevertheless, they are actively exploring the potential for a more inclusive approach to basic education in the future.

Ms. Lanre also provided more insight by saying that the government is already considering extending basic education to 12 years, and stakeholders are currently being consulted at the council level. This presents an opportunity for the Education Policy Commission to engage in the conversation and help shape the policy. She emphasised that this is a "quick win" for the commission, as the government actively seeks input on this issue.

**Is there any thought or plan within the Policy Commission (the Basic Education Thematic Group or throughout the PC) to address teacher education? Specifically, how can we ensure a pipeline of quality teachers for basic education, TVET, and other sectors, given that teachers are critical to the success of these reforms?**

Ms. Molade emphasised the critical importance of teacher education, noting that without well-trained educators capable of delivering quality instruction, even the most well-designed policies and reforms are unlikely to succeed. She acknowledged the vital role played by colleges of education and similar institutions, recognising them as key stakeholders in the education sector. She affirmed that these institutions have been considered in the commission's work and will continue to be actively involved in ongoing discussions and efforts to improve the education system.

# Session Report

Recommendations from Q & A Session	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Expand TVET Policy Coverage:</b> Ensure that the review and policy framework for TVET include all subsectors—formal, informal, and non-formal (such as the apprenticeship system)—to comprehensively address all stakeholders' needs.</li><li>• <b>Improve Teacher Quality Across Education Levels:</b> Enhancing teacher training and development initiatives will address the shortage of quality teachers for basic education, TVET, and other sectors.</li><li>• <b>Leverage Successful TVET Integration Models:</b> Identify, explore, and promote successful models where students receive academic and vocational training, enabling them to graduate with dual competencies.</li><li>• <b>Engage Teacher Training Institutions in Reform Efforts:</b> Actively involve colleges of education and other teacher training institutions in the commission's work to ensure that teachers are adequately prepared to implement education reforms effectively.</li></ul>
<div>Closing Remarks</div> <div>Mr Godwin Henry, Thematic Lead, Basic Education</div>	<p>Mr. Godwin Henry thanked everyone for participating in the first General Assembly of 2025, noting that this marks only the beginning of continued engagements planned for the year. He emphasised the commission’s eagerness to collaborate closely with all stakeholders throughout the year.</p> <p>He acknowledged the thoughtful feedback shared during the session. He assured participants that their contributions would be instrumental in refining and strengthening the commission’s work plan and guiding its presentation where necessary.</p> <p>Looking ahead, he conveyed optimism about the collective potential to drive meaningful reforms and implement the changes required to improve the education system, ultimately benefiting the Nigerian child.</p> <p>In closing, he once again thanked everyone for their commitment and contributions, and wished them a pleasant day and a wonderful weekend.</p>

# ABOUT THE NESG

The NESG is an independent, non-partisan, non-sectarian organisation, committed to fostering open and continuous dialogue on Nigeria's economic development. The NESG strives to forge a mutual understanding between leaders of thought so as to explore, discover and support initiatives directed at improving Nigeria's economic policies, institutions, and management.

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