



# Leaving No Child Behind

Jigawa State scales up PLANE's foundational learning and numeracy interventions across the state



LEARNERS FROM ONE OF THE SCHOOLS NOW INCLUDED IN JIGAWA GOVT'S SCALE-UP PLAN, SHUWARIN KUDU PRIMARY SCHOOL, KIYAWA LGA, JIGAWA.

***In Jigawa State, government and education stakeholders are renewing efforts to address learning poverty – a situation in which many children are unable to read or solve simple math problems at the completion of basic school.***

***Inspired by the measurable gains achieved through the UK-funded Partnership for Learning for All in Nigeria (PLANE) programme in selected local government areas (LGAs), the Jigawa State Government is scaling up PLANE's evidence-based foundational learning initiatives across all its 27 LGAs. Building on proven results in seven pilot areas, this expansion includes recruiting and training teachers, reproducing instructional materials, and continuing free education for girls – a major move toward improving learning outcomes for every child.***

## The State Of Education in Nigeria

Nigeria is grappling with a learning crisis, marked by troubling statistics and widespread challenges in education. As the world targets quality education for all by the year 2030, 70% of Nigerian children aged 7-14 cannot read a simple sentence or solve a basic math problem, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF 2022). This situation remains a concern to education stakeholders across the country, particularly in northern Nigeria, which has the largest share of the problem.

The reasons for low literacy and numeracy vary. Lack of qualified teachers, poor school resources and infrastructure,

especially in rural areas, poverty, and cultural and social norms are some of the most common factors that have hindered access to quality education for many children, which in turn has affected their ability to become resourceful members of the society who can contribute to human capital development.

Since 2021, PLANE has been working with Jigawa, as well as Kano and Kaduna states, to improve learning outcomes for children in the states, including marginalised groups such as girls and children with disabilities.





LEARNERS IN CLASS

## Why Jigawa Is Scaling Up PLANE's Pilot programme

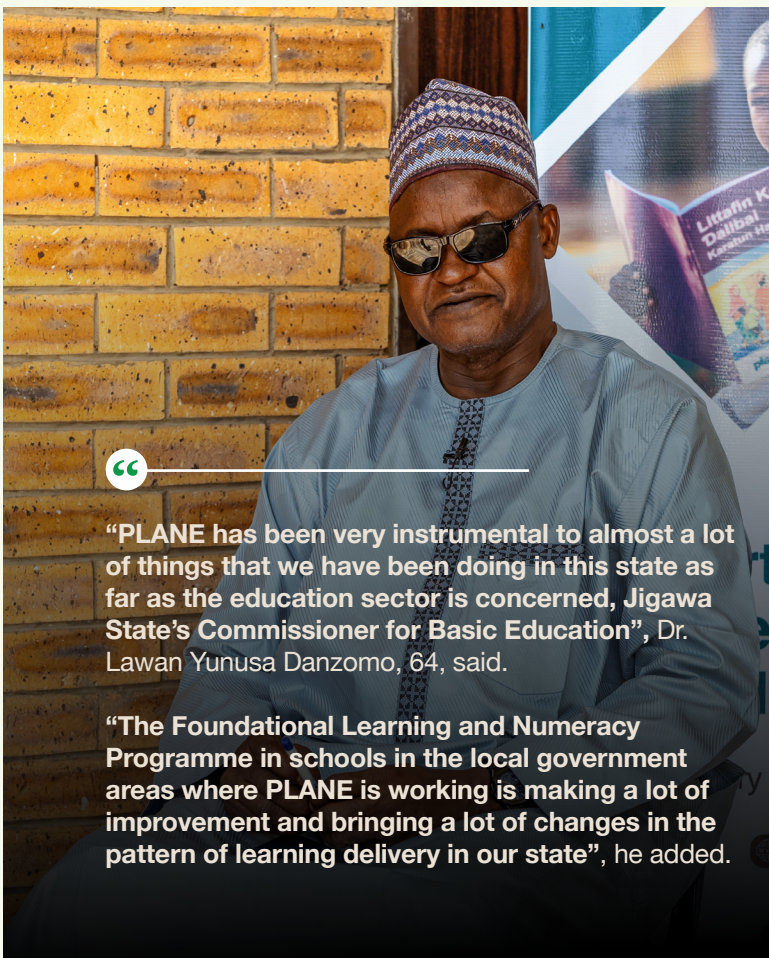
Tackling these challenges requires a multifaceted approach and strong collaboration among stakeholders. Following PLANE's notable results in improving learning outcomes in supported local governments areas where the PLANE programme was piloted - within Jigawa and other neighbouring states, the Jigawa State Government has committed to scaling up these proven interventions. This move is aimed at ensuring long-term sustainability, stronger local ownership, and greater statewide impact through the adoption of PLANE's foundational learning model.

The Commissioner acknowledged PLANE's support in the areas of teacher training, provision of teaching and learning materials, strengthening of school monitoring mechanisms, and community mobilisation, as well as support with policy review and development, among others.

Development programmes typically support governments to address challenges by proffering or demonstrating innovations and solutions that work. Hence, PLANE's support in Jigawa has been concentrated in only seven LGAs – Dutse, Gagarawa, Jahun, Kafin Hausa, Malam Madori, Taura, and Yankwashi – about a quarter of the LGAs in the state.

Jigawa, like many states in northern Nigeria, is grappling with a severe learning crisis, where the majority of early-grade learners are failing to acquire foundational literacy skills. Data from UNICEF reveals that less than 1 in 10 pupils in the state meet minimum proficiency levels (2% literacy and 0.8% numeracy). A learning outcome assessment conducted by the PLANE programme in 2024 also revealed that close to a third of Jigawa Schools have only two teachers at the primary level, with class sizes being as high as 114 learners to a teacher, as opposed to the recommended 35:1 ratio by UNESCO.

These stark statistics highlight a critical need for urgent education reform, therefore, the scale-up of PLANE's intervention offers a clear pathway towards bridging the learning gap in the state. With two years of learning intervention, the PLANE programme has already recorded commendable gains in learning outcomes, about 30% of children in PLANE-supported schools made progress in literacy levels while close to half of the learners improved a level in mathematics. With these results in the midst of systemic challenges, The state governments commitments are now being followed up with concrete actions.



“PLANE has been very instrumental to almost a lot of things that we have been doing in this state as far as the education sector is concerned, Jigawa State's Commissioner for Basic Education”, Dr. Lawan Yunusa Danzomo, 64, said.

“The Foundational Learning and Numeracy Programme in schools in the local government areas where PLANE is working is making a lot of improvement and bringing a lot of changes in the pattern of learning delivery in our state”, he added.

JIGAWA STATE'S COMMISSIONER FOR BASIC EDUCATION, DR. LAWAN YUNUSA DANZOMO

**About 30% of children**

in PLANE-supported schools made progress in literacy levels

**About 50%**

improved a level in mathematics



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**“All the remaining local government areas where PLANE is not working have been included in our budget and a lot of funds have been provided to do exactly the same programme in these areas”,** the Commissioner said.

The training of teachers was top on the list of the scale-up interventions. According to Abdulsalam, who is also the Chairman of the State School Improvement Team (SSIT), a state organ for ensuring quality teaching and learning in schools, the teacher training was adequately planned for.

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**“The training of trainers, TOT, to support the master trainer for the scale-up, [as well as] the materials, feeding, and allowances for the teachers that were trained for three days, all this was settled and handled by SUBEB in collaboration with the Ministry of Basic Education. We have now trained the teachers and head teachers on P1 and P2 foundational literacy and numeracy”,** Abdulsalam recalled.

Tasiru Guda, 53, Deputy Director of Planning, Research and Statistics (PRS), Jigawa SUBEB corroborates Abdulsalam:

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**“PLANE intervenes in seven LGAs. Then UNICEF selected some LGAs. We have remaining at least 10 LGAs that are left behind. That is where SUBEB intervened to scale the PLANE interventions. We did the training under the support of PLANE. They give us all necessary technical advice for that scale-up. And we are still on that. We are waiting for the production of the textbooks so that they can be distributed to the schools”,** Guda said.

TASIRU GUDA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF PLANNING, RESEARCH AND STATISTICS (PRS)

The scale-up by the state government also prioritises the monitoring and supervision of teachers, another critical component of PLANE’s interventions.

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**“We were responsible for monitoring, to go and and find out how far the teachers are delivering, how far the learners are comprehending. Is there really a benefit? Or are there issues? If there are issues, what have we done? Are they issues that may be tackled by the teachers, head teachers, School-Based Management Committees, we the master trainers, SUBEB, Ministry of Basic Education, or the State Government? We have done all these”,** Abdulsalam confirmed.

Nafiu Abdul, 33, and Saddika Abdullahi, 37, headteacher and classroom teacher respectively at Shuwarin Kudu Primary

School, Kiyawa LGA are among the over 1400 teachers and headteachers trained during the scale-up. They are happy that the PLANE training they had heard about from their colleagues in other LGAs has now come to their own LGA.



NAFIU ABDUL, HEADTEACHER, SHUWARIN KUDU PRIMARY SCHOOL, KIYAWA LGA

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**“The training was on how to improve teaching and learning in primary schools. Before, our teachers were not involving pupils during their lessons. They just come, write the topic on the blackboard, explain, and just go. But after they received the training from PLANE, they understand that you, as a teacher, you cannot teach alone. You have to involve the pupils”,** Nafiu revealed.

Siddika, who now has a Teachers’ Guide for the first time, as part of PLANE’s contribution to encourage the scale-up, shares how she benefited from the scale-up intervention by the state government:



SADDIKA ABDULLAHI, CLASSROOM TEACHER, SHUWARIN KUDU PRIMARY SCHOOL, KIYAWA LGA

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**“I learnt about the teachers’ guide, ‘Jagoran Malami’. I learnt about how to use teaching aids and songs to teach, like teaching them the sound ‘jah’ in song. I learnt a whole lot more, like how to use flash cards, stones and sticks as teaching aids. It makes it easier for the children to learn and relate. The students now learn in groups and it makes it easier for them to learn.”**

Jigawa government also recognised that a shortage of teachers has contributed to poor foundational literacy and numeracy in the state. Hence, it made teacher recruitment a focal point of the scale-up.



**“We have about 7,500 new teachers injected into the system – 3,000 on a permanent basis and 4,500 on a temporary basis. And as time goes on, we will continue to evaluate those who are on the Jigawa Teacher (JT) temporary programme and gradually put them into full employment in the civil service”,** Commissioner Danzomo explained.

He explained further that the state localised the recruitment of the teachers, posting qualified teachers to only their localities or immediate communities.



**“We are trying to see how we can make sure we get our teachers to remain in school to do their work and then also to get the children to learn. Any spending on education is meant to achieve these three things: quality education, learning outcomes and teacher productivity. If the teacher doesn’t work and the child doesn’t learn, your investment is useless”,** Dr. Danzomo.



LEARNERS SHOWCASING THE PLANE BOOKS

In addition, the state is continuing its free education programme for girls from primary school to university level, which it started about 10 years ago. This has continued to boost girl-child enrolment in the state, especially in rural areas.

The scale-up in Jigawa is still ongoing. For example, the government is printing and distributing PLANE-adopted literacy and numeracy textbooks across the state. So far, the progress by the state remains a reflection of what a state can achieve if there is a strong will to leverage existing partnerships and commit the required funds for basic education development.



**“What we are trying to do is to improve foundational learning and numeracy for our children in schools so that gradually, we can continue to build the foundation of their intellectual development up to the highest level”,** the Commissioner concluded.

PLANE’s interventions in Jigawa State have reached over 2,500 teachers and about 330,000 learners across seven LGAs. With the interventions being scaled up by the state government across other LGAs, close to 1,000 schools and many more children in the state stand to benefit from quality foundational learning and numeracy support. The government is covering the cost of all pupils’ books while the PLANE programme has supported with Teachers’ Guides and training.

### PLANE’s Interventions in Jigawa State Reach



## Driving Change Through PLANE’s Support

With strong political will, clear planning, and support from development partners like PLANE, Jigawa’s approach offers a promising model for other Nigerian states facing similar learning challenges. As implementation continues and results are tracked, this scale-up could help shape national strategies for foundational learning - ensuring more children, especially marginalised groups such as girls, children with disabilities and those in rural and underserved communities, gain the skills they need to succeed.

\* The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the UK Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office.



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