



Schools with
standard
infrastructure
and amenities
encourage
adolescents to
stay in school
- Gbolahan



Gown and Town: Synergy for Enhanced Societal Impact

A Community Engagement Project among Stakeholders in Adolescent Health and Well-Being in
Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria



School owners' engagement brief

Background

Adolescence (the period from 10 to 19 years) is a time of immense opportunity. It is also a time when some individuals start engaging in health-risk behaviours such as smoking, drinking alcohol and unsafe sexual practices¹. Studies we conducted in Oyo state, Nigeria, revealed that these risky behaviours are more common among older adolescents who are not enrolled in senior secondary school^{2, 3}. In Oyo state, more than half (53%) of adolescents who should be in senior secondary school are not in school; ⁴ even though education is currently free from primary to senior secondary school⁵. These adolescents who are out of school are exposed to the likelihood of engaging in unhealthy practices.

What did we set out to do?

Our team conducted a community engagement project to sensitize stakeholders (adolescents, teachers, private school owners and government) about the importance of senior secondary school enrollment

How did we engage with our key audience?

Teachers and secondary school students reviewed existing research data highlighting the role of senior secondary school enrollment in protecting against unhealthy habits

Groups of teachers came together to draw maps of their immediate community and identified and discussed about issues within these communities that promote or hinder senior secondary school enrollment

In and out-of-school adolescents took photographs of things and activities within their communities that promote or hinder senior secondary school enrollment, discussed their findings and came up with suggestions for improving senior secondary school retention.

What can school owners (government and private school proprietors) do to promote senior secondary school retention?

Provide an enabling environment for full policy implementation by:

- i. Employing adequate numbers of trained teaching and non-teaching staff to work in the schools
- ii. Conducting training and re-training of staff at all levels on the provisions of the policy as well as their duties in ensuring students remain in school
- iii. Equipping schools to ensure a conducive environment for teaching and learning
- iv. Provide scholarships to indigent students

Further reading

UNESCO International Bureau of Education. (2010/2011). World Data on Education. 7th Edition, 2010/11. Retrieved from http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Publications/WDE/2010/pdf-versions/Nigeria.pdf on 20 February, 2020

¹UNICEF. (2012). Progress for Children. A report card on adolescents. Geneva, Switzerland: UNICEF

²Olumide AO. (2017) Unpublished. Prevalence, Predictors and Costs of Health-Risk Behaviours among Adolescents in Oyo State, Nigeria. PhD thesis, University of Ibadan, Nigeria

³Olumide, A. O., et al. 2014. Predictors of substance use among vulnerable adolescents in five cities: findings from the well-being of adolescents in vulnerable environments study. *Journal of Adol. Health* 55:6: S39-S47.

⁴Federal Ministry of Education (2017). Nigeria Education Indicators 2016. . Viewed online at <http://www.nemis.gov.ng/downloads/fold/Nigeria%20Education%20Indicators%202016.pdf> on 10 February, 2020

⁵Editor. Live Times. Why I declared free education in Oyo – Makinde. Nov 10, 2019 Live Times. Viewed online at <https://www.livetimesng.com/why-i-declared-free-education-in-oyo-%E2%80%95-makinde/> on 10 February, 2020

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