



FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA
FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION



**SPECIAL PROGRAMS OPERATIONS
AND IMPLEMENTATION
UNIT (SPOIU)**

PROJECT REPORT

*Implementing Nigeria's Education Sector
Renewal Initiative Under the Leadership
of*

Dr. Maruf Olatunji Alausa, CON

*Honourable Minister of Education
Federal Republic of Nigeria*

May 2025 - May 2026



Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR
President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed
Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria



Dr. Maruf Olatunji Alausa, CON

Honourable Minister of Education
Federal Republic of Nigeria



Prof. Suwaiba Said Ahmad
Honourable Minister of State for Education
Federal Republic of Nigeria



FOREWORD

Nigeria stands at a defining moment in its national development; one where the strength of our education system will determine the strength of our future. Under the Renewed Hope Agenda of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, this administration has placed human capital development at the centre of national transformation, with education serving as the foundation of a modern, knowledge-driven economy.

At the Federal Ministry of Education, the Nigeria Education Sector Renewal Initiative (NESRI) provides the strategic framework guiding this transformation. Strategy, however, must be matched with disciplined execution. Turning policy into tangible impact requires strong systems, effective coordination, and a relentless focus on delivery.

This is the role of the Special Programmes Operations and Implementation Unit (SPOIU); the engine room responsible for translating reform priorities into programmes that reach students, educators, and institutions across the country.

This report documents SPOIU's work between May 2025 to May 2026, highlighting the design, coordination, and implementation of five strategic programmes:

- Technical and Vocational Education and Training Initiative (TVET)
- Diaspora Bridge
- Student Venture Capital Grant (S-VCG)
- National Education Data Infrastructure (NEDI)
- Tertiary Institution Staff Support Fund (TISSF)

Together, these initiatives reflect a new approach to education reform in Nigeria; one focused on innovation, accountability, and measurable outcomes. From expanding skills training and supporting student entrepreneurship, to strengthening national education data systems and empowering institutional staff, these programmes are helping to modernise Nigeria's education ecosystem and unlock the full potential of the country's talent.

The work of SPOIU also signals a deliberate shift in how government programmes are executed and implemented. Across these initiatives, digital systems are strengthening transparency, technology is improving monitoring and accountability, and collaboration with key stakeholders is ensuring that delivery is efficient, measurable, and responsive to national needs.

This report therefore stands not only as a record of SPOIU's activities, but as evidence of a broader cultural shift within the education sector; from announcing reforms to delivering them. As Nigeria continues to advance the goals of the Renewed Hope Agenda, the Federal Ministry of Education remains committed to ensuring that every reform translates into real opportunities for Nigerians and lasting progress for the nation.

Dr. Maruf Olatunji Alausa, CON

Honourable Minister of Education
Federal Republic of Nigeria



REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF STATE FOR EDUCATION

Education reform is most meaningful when policy translates into visible improvement in the lives of citizens. Across Nigeria today, the demand is no longer simply for new ideas, but for reforms that are effectively coordinated, efficiently implemented, and capable of producing measurable impact at scale.

Nigeria's education reform has therefore moved beyond intention. The true measure now is whether systems are working, whether classrooms are improving, and whether opportunities are reaching the learners who need them most.

This report demonstrates how the Special Programs Operations and Implementation Unit (SPOIU) continues to contribute to that national objective under the Nigeria Education Sector Renewal Initiative (NESRI), supporting implementation across priority interventions designed to strengthen delivery, improve coordination, and translate reform into measurable impact.

The programmes documented in this report reflect a practical, integrated, and forward-looking approach to strengthening Nigeria's education ecosystem. They respond directly to some of the most pressing realities confronting the sector youth unemployment, skills gaps, limited access to innovation financing, fragmented education data systems, institutional capacity challenges, and the need to improve welfare support for tertiary institution staff.

What is particularly significant is the interconnected nature of these interventions. The Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Initiative is expanding access to skills that connect learning to work, enterprise, and productivity. Diaspora Bridge is strengthening collaboration between Nigerian institutions and global expertise while reconnecting Nigeria with its global academic and professional community. The Student Venture Capital Grant is unlocking innovation, creativity, and entrepreneurship among students. NEDI is reinforcing the foundation of the sector through stronger data systems, evidence-based planning, transparency, and accountability.

Education Quality Assurance interventions are also strengthening teacher professional development and improving classroom practice through initiatives such as EduRevamp, helping to build teacher capacity and improve learning outcomes across the country. At the same time, TISSF continues to support the welfare, stability, and wellbeing of tertiary institution staff, recognising that strong education systems ultimately depend on the people who sustain them.

Across these interventions, a clearer national direction is emerging, stronger coordination, more effective implementation, deeper accountability, and a sharper focus on results that are data-driven, technology-enabled, and sustainable.

The Federal Ministry of Education recognises that meaningful and lasting reform requires collaboration. The progress reflected in this report has been made possible through the commitment of partner agencies, development institutions, private sector collaborators, state governments, institutional leaders, and technical teams working collectively toward shared national goals.



I commend the Honourable Minister of Education for his leadership and strategic direction, as well as the SPOIU team and all programme partners for their dedication to delivery, innovation, and results.

As implementation deepens, our focus must remain clear and unwavering: expanding access, strengthening quality, improving transparency, empowering teachers, and ensuring that every intervention delivers real value to learners and to the nation.

In the end, the true test of reform is not in policy design alone, but in the transformation, it creates in the life of a child today and in the future of Nigeria tomorrow.

Professor Suwaiba Said Ahmad

Honourable Minister of State for Education
Federal Republic of Nigeria



INTRODUCTION



This is not a routine government progress report. It is a public account of what was promised, what was built, and what was delivered; addressed to every Nigerian with a stake in the future of education in this country. For political leaders, it offers a blueprint for accountable and digital-first delivery. For the media and the public, it answers a fundamental question: where did the investment go, and who is impacted? Between May 2025 and May 2026, the Federal Ministry of Education, through SPOIU, moved from policy to execution at a scale rarely seen in Nigeria's public sector. Under the leadership of Dr. Maruf Olatunji Alausa CON, five national programmes were designed and operationalised across four pillars of NESRI spanning; TVET expansion, diaspora

engagement, Student Venture Capital Grant (S-VCG), Nigeria Education Data Initiative (NEDI), and the Tertiary Institution Staff Support Fund (TISSF). Each required building new systems from scratch, or upgrading existing systems: digital platforms, identity-based verification, direct-to-beneficiary funding, and milestone-linked accountability mechanisms.

Impact on Learners and the Nation

The measure of any public programme is not activities started or completed but lives meaningfully changed. The TVET expansion brought technical and vocational training to Nigerians previously excluded from formal skills pathways strengthening the pipeline of certified artisans and technicians that Nigeria's industrial ambitions require. Diaspora engagement brought world-class Nigerian expertise back into contact with domestic institutions, seeding knowledge transfer and mentorship across universities and polytechnics. Student venture are empowering Nigeria learners to develop the next global solutions starting by generating solutions to local problems, TISSF is focused on improving the welfare of our educators and NEDI has begun addressing one of our most persistent planning weaknesses: the absence of reliable data on who is being educated, and to what outcome. Taken together, these programmes represent a coherent national investment in human capital, grounded in the conviction that Nigeria's greatest resource is the intellectual and creative potential of its 220 million people. When that potential is unlocked at scale, the returns are generational.

How we delivered

Four principles shaped every programme with each having a deliberate departure from how public initiatives have historically been run in Nigeria:

- Digital-first delivery that eliminates paper-based bottlenecks and building traceability into every transaction.
- Identity-based verification ensuring that only real, verified beneficiaries participate and receive programme benefits.
- Direct-to-beneficiary funding reducing leakage and ensuring resources flow to people, not intermediaries.
- Milestone-linked accountability disbursements tied to verified evidence of progress, not assumptions.

Execution at this scale is neither linear nor without difficulty. The first implementation cycle required continuous adaptation refining systems, responding to infrastructure constraints, and adjusting design in real time.



This report does not shy away from those challenges. Honesty about what proved difficult is the foundation on which more robust delivery will be built.

The foundation has been laid. The next phase will deepen impact, strengthen systems, and extend reach. This report is not merely a record of what has been done but an invitation to join us on this journey and hold us accountable to what comes next.

Adebayo Onigbanjo

National Coordinator

Special Programs Operation and Implementation Unit (SPOIU)

Federal Ministry of Education





SECTION 1

OVERVIEW OF SPOIU

The Special Programs Operations and Implementation Unit (SPOIU) is a unit established with the approval of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the identification and execution of special interventions in education. The Honourable Minister of Education has identified specific projects to be funded via the FME-SPOIU budget allocation within the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), pursuant to Section 7e of the TETFund Act. These are executed under the direct supervision of the office of the Honourable Minister of Education. Under the leadership of the Honourable Minister, the unit serves as a dedicated execution arm for several high-priority initiatives under the NESRI framework.

SPOIU was created specifically to manage time-bound, technically complex, and multi-partner programmes that constitute the Honourable Minister's direct reform agenda. It operates as the bridge between ministerial policy intent and programme delivery on the ground — responsible for translating strategic objectives into technical programme designs, securing and managing partner relationships, building the digital and accountability infrastructure each programme requires, and producing verified implementation records through which the Ministry accounts to the public for resources deployed.

The five programmes managed by SPOIU during this reporting period span four of NESRI's six pillars: Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), Science, Technology,

Engineering, Mathematics and Medical Sciences (STEMM), Education Data and Digitalisation, and Education Quality Assurance.

Together, they represent the most operationally intensive component of the Ministry's reform agenda, requiring simultaneous coordination with multiple federal agencies, private sector partners, development partners, and over a thousand institutions across all 36 states and the FCT.

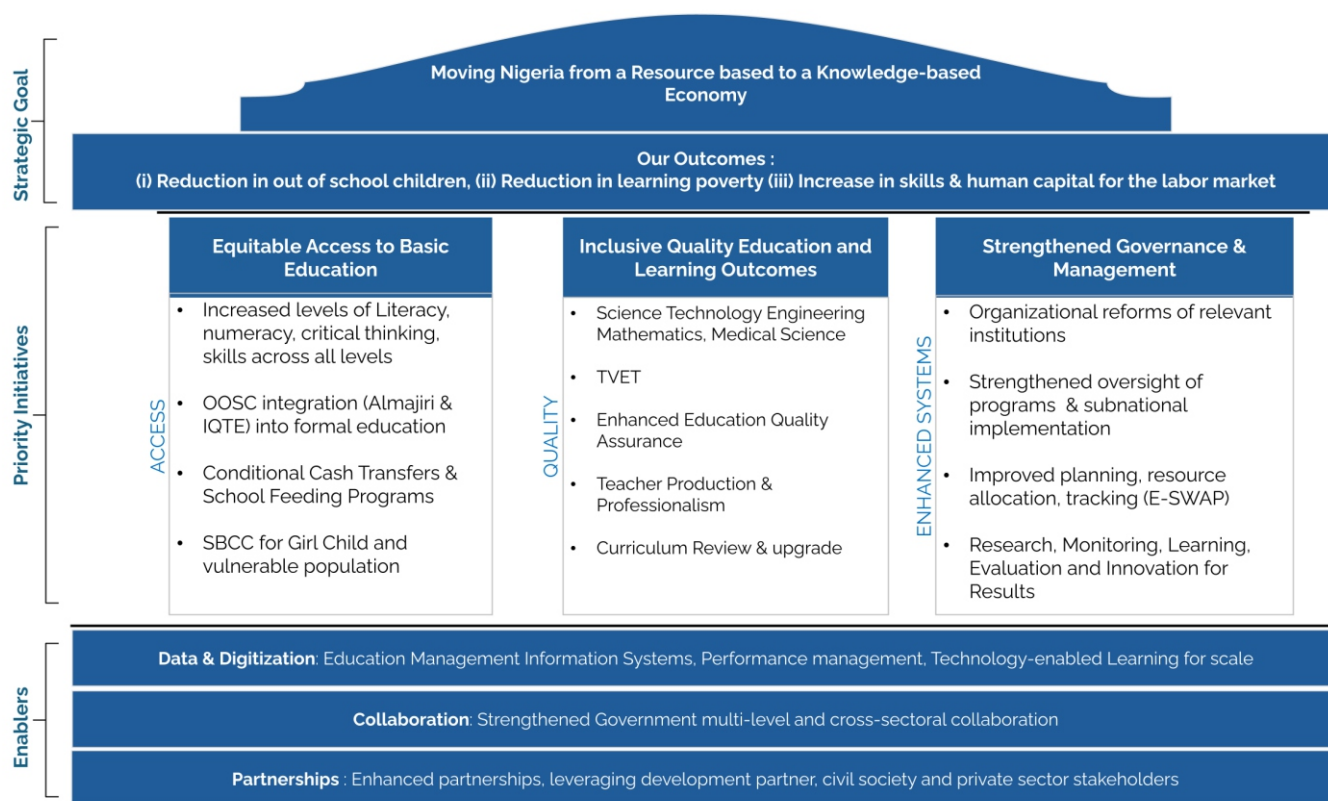
SPOIU's Core Purpose

SPOIU is an execution arm of the Federal Ministry of Education and a key driver of NESRI — the unit that brings several of the framework's six pillars to life through structured programme design, coordinated execution, and rigorous accountability.





The Nigerian Education Sector Renewal Initiative (NESRI) for Renewed Hope



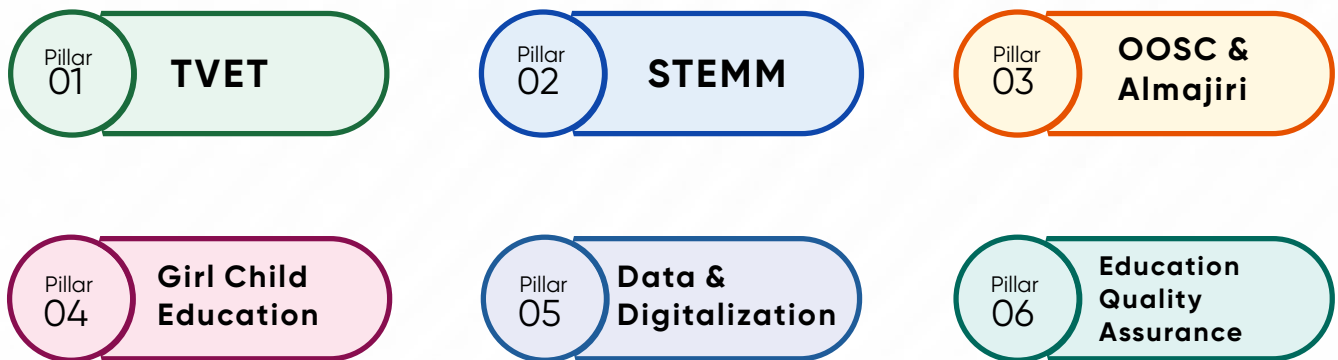


SECTION 2

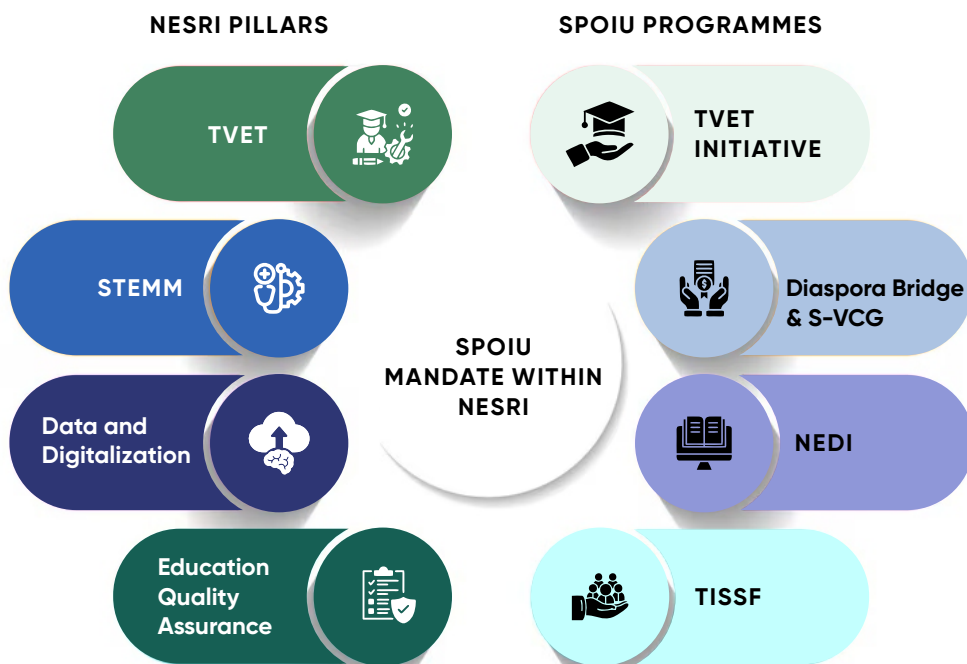
MANDATE AND ROLE WITHIN NESRI

2.1 Position Within the NESRI Architecture

The Nigeria Education Sector Renewal Initiative (NESRI) provides a six-pillar strategic framework for transforming Nigeria's education system.



SPOIU's mandate is specific: to manage the end-to-end implementation lifecycle of programmes requiring new digital platforms, new partnership structures, or new accountability systems built from scratch.





2.2 The Four Core Responsibilities

Programme Design and Operationalisation

—developing the technical blueprints, eligibility criteria, delivery systems, and financial flow architectures for each initiative from policy concept to working programme.

Stakeholder and Partner Coordination

—managing relationships with implementing partners, including the Federal Ministry of Education, TETFund, NELFUND, JAMB, WAEC, NECO, NUC, NABTEB, NBTE, NIMC, the Bank of Industry, the Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCom), Google, Afara Initiative, Kaizenest Consultancy and development partners, including UNICEF and the World Bank, amongst others, ensuring each partner’s contribution is correctly sequenced and integrated.

Digital Platform Development and Management

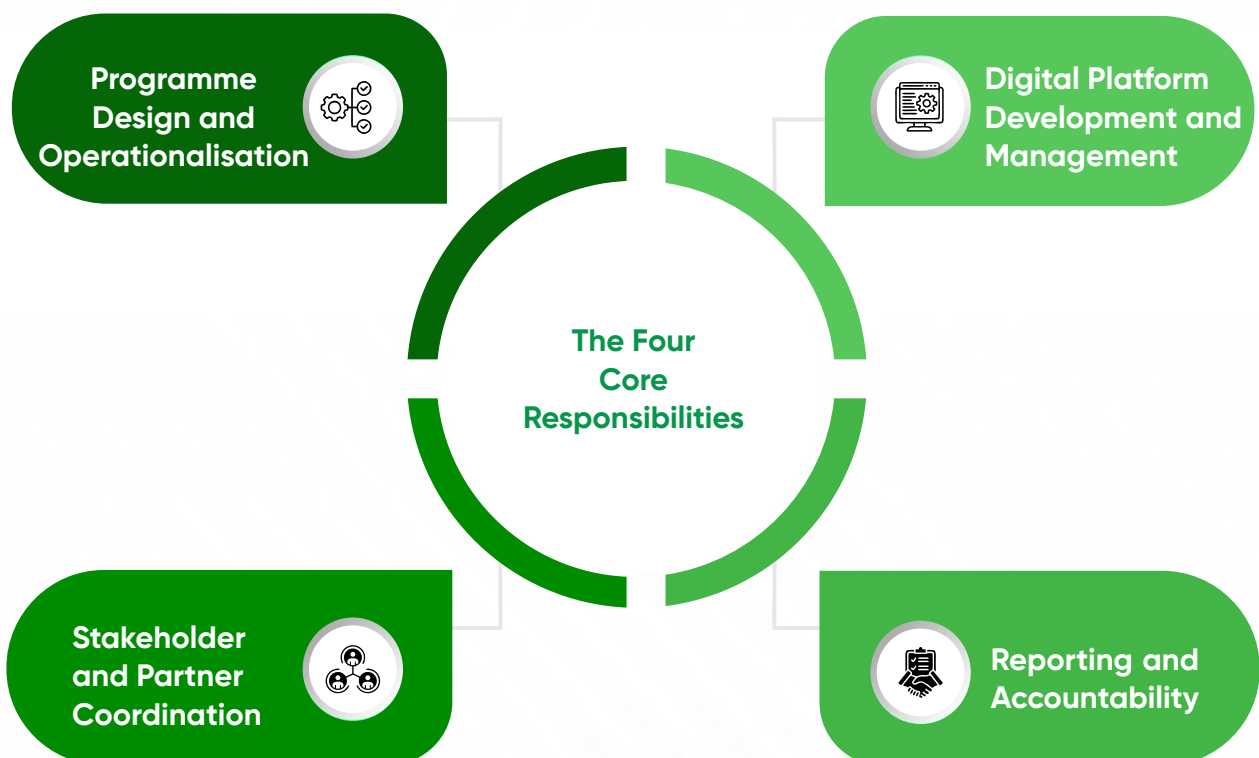
— establishing and maintaining the portals, verification systems, data dashboards, and communication infrastructure each programme requires.

Reporting and Accountability

— compiling verified performance data, conducting impact assessments, and producing the official implementation records through which the Ministry accounts for resources deployed.

2.3 Implementation Framework: The Four-Phase Delivery Model

Every SPOIU programme moves through four sequential implementation phases, each representing a distinct type of work.





PHASE	DESCRIPTION
Programme Design	Full technical architecture: eligibility criteria, application and verification systems, funding flow mechanisms, and partnership agreements.
Partner & Platform Activation	Partner agencies onboarded, digital portals deployed, and data pipelines established for real-time monitoring.
Active Implementation	Day-to-day coordination: application flows, verification, disbursements, partner communication, and accountability systems.
Monitoring, Reporting & Course Correction	Continuous performance assessment against milestones, verified data compilation, and targeted adjustments where gaps appear.



L-R: Professor Suwaiba Said Ahmed, Honourable Minister of State for Education; Dr. Tunji Alausa, CON, Honourable Minister of Education, Mr. Faruk Lawal, National Universities Commission (NUC) at the Inauguration of Governing Councils and Principal Officers at Federal University of Agriculture and Technology, Okeho, Oyo State & Federal University of Health Sciences and Technology, Tsafe, Zamfara.



SECTION 3

VERIFICATION FRAMEWORK

The integrity of every SPOIU programme depends on the reliability of its verification systems. Across all five programmes, SPOIU has implemented a layered architecture structured

around four interlocking safeguards. The specific tools applied vary by programme based on whether financial disbursements are involved.

VERIFICATION LAYER	HOW IT WORKS	PROGRAMMES APPLIED
1. Identity & Vetting	NIN-BVN integration confirms applicant identity against the national biometric database for financial programmes. A structured expert-vetting matrix is used for non-financial programmes (Diaspora Bridge), and API integration with data protection compliance is applied for NEDI.	TVET, TISSF, S-VCG, Diaspora Bridge, NEDI
2. Payment Verification	All financial transfers flow directly to verified beneficiary bank accounts. No cash payments, no third-party collection. Every transaction is auditable against confirmed identity and attendance data.	TVET, TISSF, S-VCG
3. Monitoring & Evaluation	Real-time dashboards provide insights and monitoring across all programmes. The platforms ensure accurate data that captures all programme beneficiary information along with progress and delivery status.	All five programmes
4. Institutional Audit	Physical field visits by SPOIU officers confirm reported activities are occurring. Photographic documentation, beneficiary interviews, and infrastructure assessments complement digital records.	All five programmes





SECTION 4

COORDINATION STRUCTURE

4.1 Governance and Reporting Lines

The SPOIU operates within a governance structure designed for both speed of decision-making and rigour of accountability. The Honourable Minister of Education provides strategic direction and holds final approval authority for all major programme decisions. Reporting obligations run to the Honourable Minister, TETFund, relevant government agencies, and the public through published implementation records.

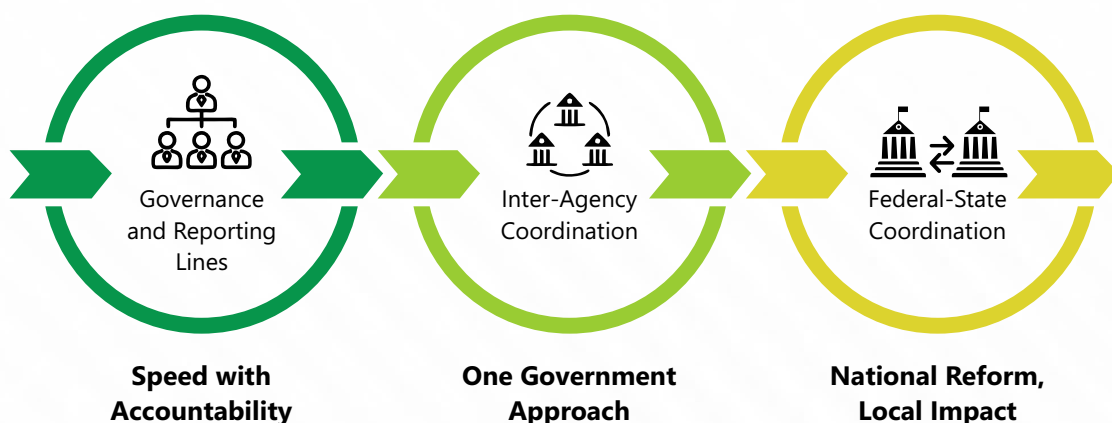
The National Coordinator, SPOIU, provides day-to-day operational oversight, translating ministerial direction into implementation tasks and managing SPOIU's interface with external partners. Within the Unit, a Programme Coordination team manages each initiative's active delivery, supported by a Technical and Digital team for platform development and data management, and a Reporting and Verification team for compiling and validating performance data.

4.2 Inter-Agency Coordination

SPOIU employs a programme-specific model: a designated SPOIU Programme Officer for each initiative serves as a single point of contact for all partners involved in that programme. All programmes work in coordination with the relevant government, private, and donor agency partners to deliver a truly coordinated 'One Government' approach that delivers on the President's Renewed Hope Agenda. This coordination also helps ensure the programmes are sustainable and continue to deliver their intended outcomes.

4.3 Federal-State Coordination

Several SPOIU programmes require active engagement with state-level institutions. The programmes are part of federal government reforms, which are vital for states to deploy and drive value at the sub-national level. The various programme coordinators work with state-level counterparts to ensure the programmes have their designed effect and impact, and that reform momentum is sustained beyond the federal tier.







SECTION 5

THE FIVE PROGRAMMES

The following sections document each programme as a standalone account. Each covers:

- the problem the programme was designed to solve
- the design and execution approach
- partnerships activated
- the verification framework specific to that programme
- verified results data; challenges encountered and responses taken
- next steps.

Programme-level policy context and national impact narratives are documented in the NESRI Stewardship Report.



1. Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)



2. Diaspora Bridge-Building, Research, Innovation, Development and a Global Engagement



3. Student Venture Capital Grant (S-VCG)-Next Mooshot Initiative



4. National Education Data Infrastructure (NEDI)



5. National Education Data Initiative a Tertiary Institution Staff Support Fund (TISSF)



PROGRAMME 1

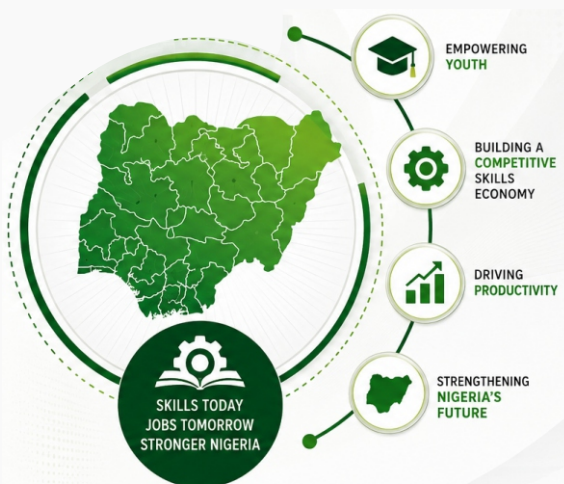
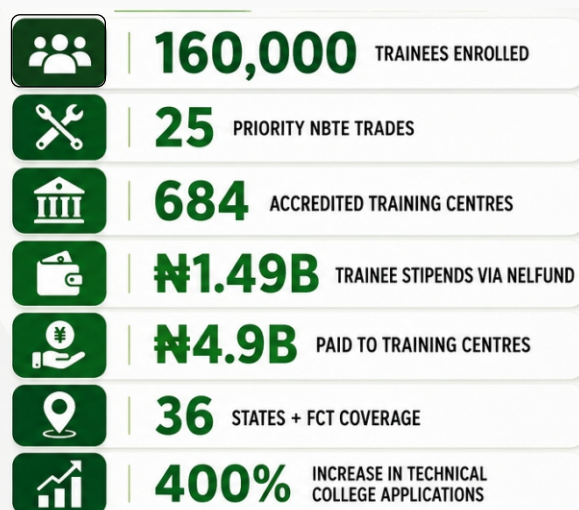
Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET)

1.1 Programme Background

Nigeria's vocational education system was characterised by low uptake, stigmatisation of technical skills, and a persistent gap between what young people were trained to do and what the labour market demanded. Despite a high number of graduates entering the workforce, employers consistently reported critical skills shortages in construction, energy, agriculture, ICT, and manufacturing sectors. Socio-economic barriers, including tuition costs, living expenses, and deeply entrenched perceptions

around technical education, compounded the problem, placing vocational training out of reach for the most economically vulnerable youth.

The TVET Initiative was launched on Friday 30th May 2025 under NESRI's Technical and Vocational Education and Training pillar to address these structural failures: reposition technical skills as a viable first-choice career pathway, dismantle socio-economic and cultural barriers to participation, and build a nationally coordinated training infrastructure capable of operating at scale.



NSQ CERTIFICATION
Aligned with the National Skills Qualifications Framework (NSQ)



NABTEB AND NBTE ALIGNMENT
Standards-aligned training and assessment through NABTEB and NBTE



NELFUND SUPPORT
Funds provided by the Ministry and disbursed via NELFUND



INDUSTRY-BASED CURRICULUM
Designed with employers for real-world relevance



NATIONWIDE ACCESS
Opportunities across 36 States + FCT through accredited centres

Key snapshot of TVET



1.2 Design Approach

The TVET Initiative's foundational design aimed to increase and streamline access pathways for more industry and market-required skills, while simultaneously revising curricula to improve skills integration in Federal and State Technical Colleges. Rather than constructing new government facilities, the initiative accredited and integrated Nigeria's existing network of private vocational training centres, enabling faster national coverage at substantially lower capital cost and allowing the programme to reach all 36 states and the FCT within months rather than years.

The initiative is structured across three core pathways:

Master 6: A six-month intensive programme for

rapid practical skills acquisition

Master 12: A twelve-month advanced specialisation for high-demand technical trades

Technical College Track: A three-year formal education programme in Federal and State Technical Colleges

Financial Support for Master 6 and Master 12: A monthly stipend of N22,500 is provided to trainees, and N45,000 per trainee is provided to training centres on a monthly basis, creating financial incentives for both participation and delivery quality simultaneously. For Federal Technical College students, free tuition, boarding, and feeding were introduced, producing a 400% surge in applications for the 2025/2026 academic session.



L-R: Professor Suwaiba Said Ahmad, Honourable Minister of State for Education; Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, CON, Honourable Minister of Education; Mr. Abel O. Enitan, Permanent Secretary; and Mr. Akintunde Sawyer, Managing Director and CEO of NELFUND.



1.3 Execution and Key Operational Decisions

The TVET portal at www.tvet.education.gov.ng serves as the operational hub of the initiative. It manages the full applicant journey: registration, NIN-BVN identity verification, beneficiary dashboards, application tracking, and centre matching. The portal's architecture enabled the processing of over 1.3 million applications and ensured that every trainee's financial disbursement is tied to a verified, unique identity.

The initiative coordinated the accreditation of over 2,600 training centres with the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), and the financial disbursement architecture is managed through the Nigerian Education Loan Fund (NELFUND). All training modules are aligned with the National Skills Qualification (NSQ) framework, with certifications issued by the National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB) and relevant awarding bodies.

The February 2026 Biometric Attendance Verification mandate was an accountability measure introduced after the first months of implementation to strengthen the direct link between active participation and financial disbursement. Technical specifications for biometric devices were developed, and synchronisation protocols were established to feed attendance records directly into the central disbursement system.

A key strategic decision during implementation: the initiative shifted from new infrastructure construction to accreditation of existing private centres, enabling faster national coverage at lower cost while also stimulating the national economy by creating opportunities for

businesses to grow, trainers to be hired, and local economies to thrive. This decision proved critical in achieving all-state coverage within the first cohort.

To strengthen implementation oversight and provide real-time visibility into programme delivery, 37 Performance Monitoring Officers (PMOs) were deployed across all states and the FCT. Through routine site visits and direct engagement with trainees, instructors, and centre administrators, PMOs collect operational data using structured questionnaires integrated into a digital monitoring portal. This feeds into a centralised dashboard providing a high-level view of attendance, centre activity, compliance, and emerging issues, enabling timely identification and escalation of challenges to programme management.



1.4 Partners and Their Roles

PARTNER	ROLE
TETFund	Oversight and funding agency for programme sustainability.
NELFUND	Stipend disbursement to trainees; training centre fee payments
NBTE (National Board for Technical Education)	Training centre accreditation: national occupational standards
NABTEB & Relevant Awarding Bodies	NSQ certification, assessment and examination authority
NIMC	NIN verification for identity authentication
State Education Ministries	State-level implementation; state technical college coordination

1.5 Verification Framework

Identity Verification: NIN-BVN integration for all trainees before enrolment. Approximately 960,000 of 1.3 million applicants verified; unverified applicants directed to NIMC for data harmonisation.

Payment Verification: All stipends are paid directly to verified beneficiary bank accounts via NELFUND. No cash payments. Every transaction is traceable against a confirmed identity.

Biometric Attendance: Deployed across all accredited centres from February 2026. Minimum 65% attendance required for stipend and centre payment eligibility. Devices operate both online and offline, synchronising automatically when connected.

Institutional Audit: Field visits by 37 deployed Performance Monitoring Officers confirm training activities, verify attendance records, and assess infrastructure standards across all states and the FCT.



Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, CON, visits AFS Vocation Hub as part of his ongoing inspection of TVET Centres enrolled in the FME TVET Initiative.



1.6 Verified Results

INDICATOR	DATA / STATUS
Launch Date	30 May 2025
Total Applications	Over 1.3 million
NIN-BVN Verified Applicants	~960,000
Total Applications	Over 1.3 million
Cohort 1 Trainees Enrolled	160,000 across 690 training centres
Stipends Disbursed to Trainees	N1.49 billion via NELFUND
Training Centre Fees Disbursed	N4.9 billion to 684 accredited centres
Cohort 1 Commenced Training	November 2025
Biometric Mandate Live	February 2026
Technical Colleges Upgraded	38 Federal and State Technical Colleges
Curriculum	25 priority NBTE trades; NSQ certified through NABTEB and awarding bodies
Geographic Coverage	All 36 states and the FCT
Programme Portal	www.tvet.education.gov.ng
Cohort 2 Registration Opened	13 April 2026



1.7 Challenges and Responses

Digital Verification: The NIN–BVN validation requirement functioned as a hard eligibility gate within the application process. Applicants with mismatched or unverified records reported that they were unable to proceed with registration.

Response: To address this, applicants were directed to the National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) to resolve discrepancies and encouraged to re-attempt registration following data harmonisation. This approach ensured that only applicants with validated identity records progressed through the system, maintaining data integrity despite initial access limitations.

Infrastructure Deficits: Many Federal Technical Colleges required rehabilitation before training delivery was possible.

Response: Parallel Phase 1 upgrades to 38 colleges, while private centre accreditation provided immediate nationwide coverage.

Biometric Adoption: Rural and low-connectivity area training centres faced inconsistent internet access.

Response: Offline-capable biometric devices with automatic synchronisation when connectivity is restored.

Instructor Shortages: The shift to a 90% practical curriculum exposed gaps in qualified master craftsmen.

Response: Rapid pedagogical upskilling programme for existing instructors, with further capacity-building plans in place for 2026.

Trainee Proximity to Centres: Attendance was affected in cases where trainees were assigned

to centres far from their registered address.

Response: The selection process was modified to allow trainees to select from a list of centres offering the trades they applied for within their local government areas.

1.8 Next Steps

Cohort 2 Enrolment: Portal reopened for the second million-trainee intake on Monday 13 April 2026, leveraging stabilised NIN-BVN and biometric systems from Cohort 1.

National Job-Matching Portal: Digital marketplace connecting NSQ-certified graduates with private sector employers.

Inter-Ministerial Collaboration: The Federal Ministry of Education is partnering with the Federal Ministry of Arts, Culture and Tourism (FMACAT) to expand creative skills training, including Creative Media, Fashion Design and Garment Production, Leather Works, Live Events and Performance Production, and Hospitality and Catering Services.

Phase 2 Workshop Rehabilitation: Infrastructure upgrades extended to additional State Technical Colleges.

Sector Skills Hubs: Partnerships with SMEDAN, Aliko Dangote Academy, Innoson Motors, Flourmills, Julius Berger, and others to establish industrial cluster-based training hubs.

Trade-specific startup kits: These kits will be distributed to both Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 trainees, with Cohort 2 receiving kits at the start of training to support hands-on learning and improve training outcomes.





PROGRAMME 2

Diaspora Bridge – Building Research, Innovation, Development and Global Engagement

2.1 Programme Background

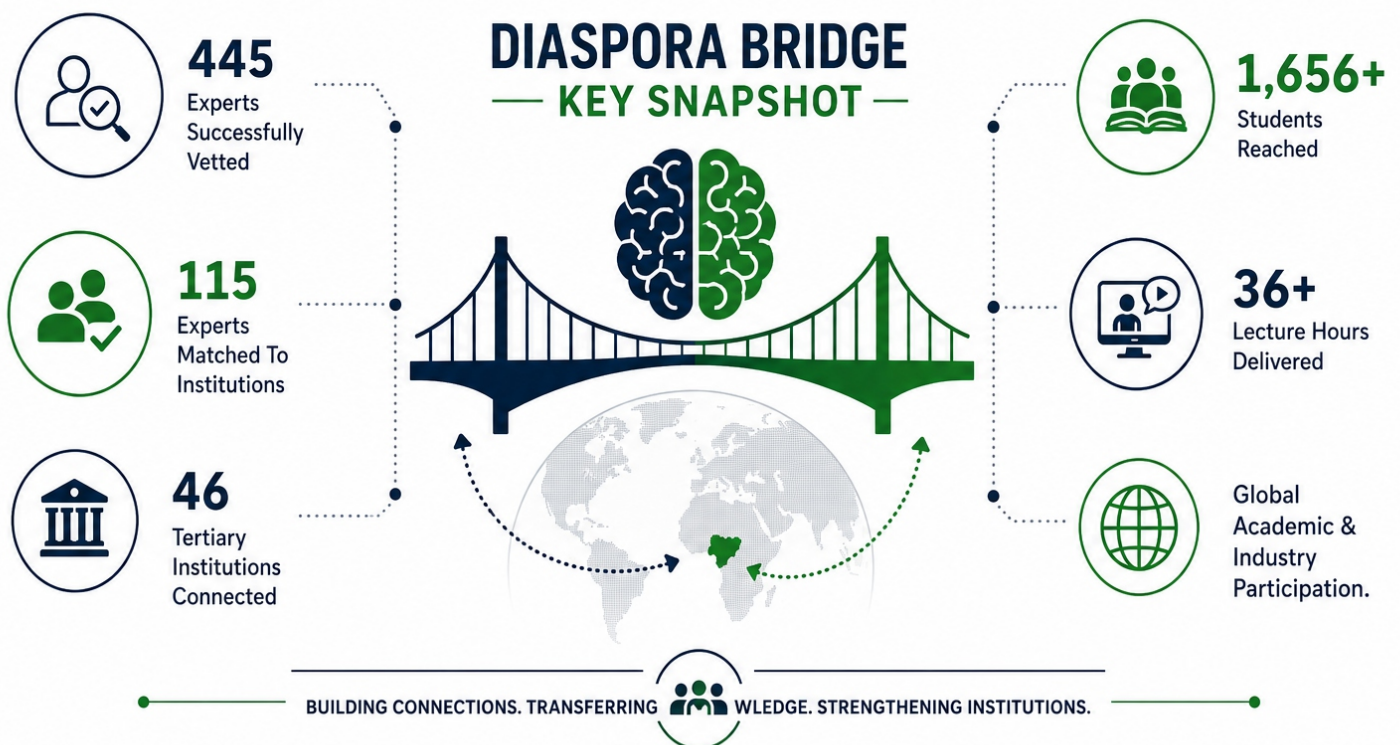
Nigeria's tertiary institutions face critical knowledge and skills gaps, particularly in STEMM disciplines, created by decades of brain drain — commonly referred to as the 'japa syndrome'. Nigerian professionals who left for opportunities abroad have built expertise that Nigerian universities urgently need in areas such as neuro-anatomy, respiratory physiotherapy, green chemistry, artificial intelligence, robotics, and biomedical engineering, among others.

Previous attempts by individual universities to engage diaspora experts had consistently failed due to unsustainable financial and logistical burdens, lack of central coordination, and engagements which remained inconsistent, fragmented, and limited in reach.

Diaspora Bridge was launched on Monday 28 July 2025 at the State House, Abuja, as a structured, centrally funded, and systematically coordinated programme to convert brain drain into brain gain at the national scale.

"Turning Nigerian Global Expertise Into National Institutional Capacity"

BRAIN DRAIN → BRAIN GAIN





2.2 Design Approach

The design resolved both root causes of previous failure: a structured matching process aligned genuine institutional needs with appropriate diaspora expertise, and central funding removed the per-institution financial barrier that had prevented any university from sustaining diaspora engagement independently.

The programme operates through a dedicated digital platform at www.diaspora-bridge.ng. Nigerian experts abroad and at home register their skills, availability, and areas of interest. An institutional needs assessment was conducted with over 230 institutions, identifying specific knowledge and skills gaps that would inform the matching process. The programme's automated vetting matrix scores diaspora expert applications against defined criteria to eliminate bias in the selection process. A skills and knowledge gap survey was also distributed to all public tertiary institutions to ensure matching reflects verified institutional needs rather than ad hoc assignment.

A critical design decision mid-implementation: the programme transitioned from purely synchronous virtual delivery to a blended asynchronous model in response to time zone

misalignment between North American diaspora experts and Nigerian institutions. Recorded lectures, shared document collaboration, and bulletin board consultation reduced reliance on live video calls and improved sustained engagement.

2.3 Execution and Key Operational Decisions

The Honourable Minister constituted the Diaspora Bridge Working Team immediately following the launch and developed the programme's virtual infrastructure. The vetting matrix was automated to eliminate selection bias, with a 45-point threshold applied consistently to all applicants.

Skills and knowledge gap surveys were distributed to all public tertiary institutions and received responses from 46 institutions, enabling evidence-based matching. The first lecture series — neuro-anatomy and respiratory physiotherapy — was coordinated with diaspora experts from the United States and the United Kingdom, with content designed to synchronise with each participating university's academic assessment calendar.



Key stakeholders (Governors, Ministers, Agency CEO's and Development Partners) at the National Launch of the FME's Diaspora Bridge Initiative in State House, Abuja.



2.4 Partners and Their Roles

PARTNER	ROLE
Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NiDCom)	Diaspora professional database; community outreach; network facilitation for launch event
National Universities Commission (NUC)	University data integration: institutional quality standards for matching
National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) & National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE)	Polytechnic and College of Education institutional data and quality assurance
Participating Diaspora Experts (921 registered)	Knowledge and skills transfer; curriculum development; research collaboration; postgraduate supervision
46 Matched Institutions	Gap survey completion; lecture integration into academic timetables; student participation

2.5 Verification Framework

Expert Vetting: Structured automated matrix scoring all diaspora applicants against defined criteria. The threshold of 45 points applied consistently. In the first cohort, 445 of 921 registered experts passed initial screening; 115 met the full threshold for institutional matching.

Lecture Verification: The Diaspora Bridge Secretariat confirms virtual lectures took place through attendance records, platform logs, and student participation data. Quality is

assessed against programme standards.

Institutional Audit: Regular check-ins with matched institutions confirm diaspora engagement is active, that agreed lecture hours are being delivered, and that student assessments incorporate Bridge content as agreed.

Impact Tracking: Participating universities use Bridge lectures as assessed content, providing a direct educational quality metric independent of attendance numbers alone.

2.6 Verified Results

INDICATOR	DATA / STATUS
Launch Date	Monday 28 July 2025, State House, Abuja
Diaspora Experts Registered	921
Successfully Screened and Vetted	445 (Cohort 1)



High-Threshold Matched (45+ points)	115 experts
Institutions Matched	46 (26 universities, 9 polytechnics, 11 Colleges of Education)
Nigerian Scholars Registered	998
Lecture Hours Delivered	36 hours (neuro-anatomy; respiratory physiotherapy)
Students Reached	1,656+
Universities Using Lectures in Assessments	All 11 participating universities
Platform	www.diaspora-bridge.ng

2.7 Challenges and Responses

Time Zone Misalignment: North American diaspora experts and Nigerian institutions faced near-opposite peak availability windows, producing high no-show rates for scheduled live sessions.

Response: Shift to a blended asynchronous model with recorded lectures and document collaboration.

ICT Infrastructure Gaps: Many tertiary institutions lacked reliable internet connectivity for live virtual classes.

Response: Recorded lecture format distributed via lower-bandwidth channels; institutions without reliable connectivity prioritised for asynchronous content. 2026 will also see

alignment with TETFund ICT interventions and the NgREN initiative to improve connectivity across institutions.

Faculty Orientation: Slow uptake by some academic departments to incorporate diaspora lectures into existing curricula.

Response: Working with heads of institutions to align Bridge content with existing course units and assessment schedules.

Sustainability Concern: Diaspora experts were initially sceptical of programme credibility given the history of failed government initiatives.

Response: Transparent vetting process, clear engagement letters, and early delivery of promised lecture infrastructure built confidence and sustained participation.



2.8 Next Steps

Increase Capacity: Scale to 7–10 virtual lecture sessions weekly from Q2 2026, expanding from the initial medical science focus into other areas, including chemistry, AI and machine learning, construction contracting, robotics, and biomedical engineering.

Physical Engagement Phase: First cohort of 10–16 diaspora academics in Nigeria for in-person mentorship, curriculum review, and postgraduate supervision between June and December 2026.

National Researcher Directory: Publication by August 2026 of a comprehensive directory

connecting Nigerian scholars with diaspora collaborators for joint research and grant applications.

Regional Workshops: Research ethics and international collaboration workshops in all six geopolitical zones to embed collaboration capacity beyond the matched institutions.

Technology Expansion: Mobile and offline engagement capabilities to allow students to access lectures directly on their devices where physical infrastructure is limited.



H.E Peter Mbah, Governor of Enugu State,; Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa CON, Honourable Minister of Education; Prof. Ali Pate, Coordinating Minister of Health & Social Welfare.





PROGRAMME 3

Student Venture Capital Grant (S-VCG) – Next Moonshot

3.1 Programme Background

Nigeria's tertiary institutions have long been home to innovative student ideas that never progress beyond campus walls because of a lack of funding, incubation support, and structured pathways from concept to commercial viability. No federal funding mechanism existed to directly finance student-led ventures with STEMM-based business ideas. Early-stage student innovation was either self-funded,

abandoned, or increasingly taken abroad.

The Student Venture Capital Grant was launched on Monday 8 December 2025 at the TETFund Auditorium, Abuja, as Nigeria's first federal equity-free funding mechanism for student entrepreneurs. It operates under NESRI's STEMM pillar and is designed to ensure that great ideas no longer die on campus.

“Funding The Next Generation Of Nigerian Innovators And Entrepreneurs.”



45

Student Ventures Funded



₦2.5B

Venture Support Commitment



AI-Assisted

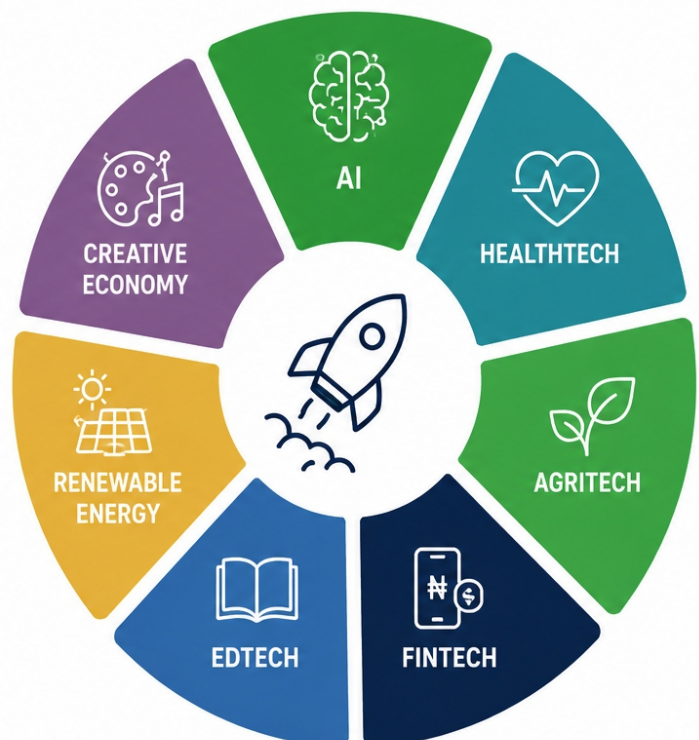
Evaluation Process



Nationwide

Institutional Participation

— INNOVATION CATEGORIES —





3.2 Design Approach

The S-VCG was designed to offer beneficiaries a world-class entry point into the startup and equity funding process. The system combines automation and human judgement across a multi-stage evaluation process. In the first stage, Google Gemini AI provides consistent initial screening of all applications. Shortlisted candidates then proceed to 10 human evaluators with experience in identifying high-potential ventures. Evaluated submissions are then scored by an evaluation committee. Finalists attend a three-day bootcamp before presenting shark-tank style to a panel of venture capitalists, industry experts, and academic leaders.

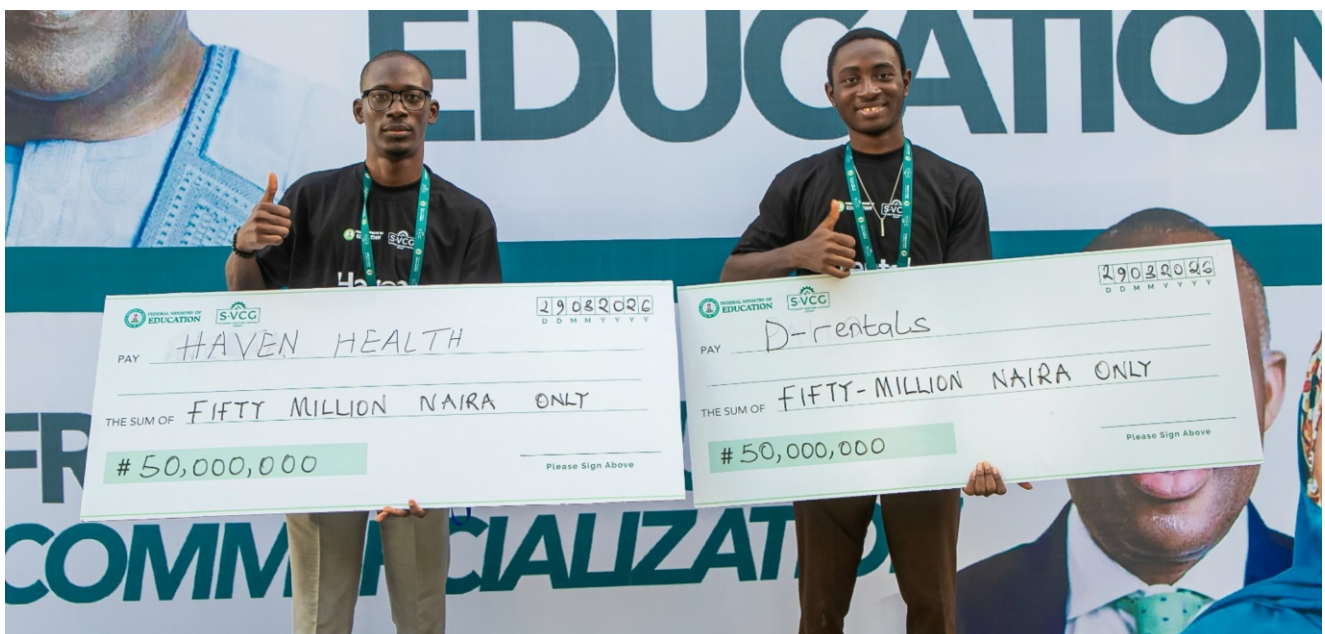
The programme is intentionally equity-free — beneficiaries retain full ownership of their ventures. Disbursement is structured in milestone-linked tranches: proof-of-concept funding, prototype development support, and market entry capital. This architecture creates active incentives for performance without creating loan-style repayment pressure on student entrepreneurs.

3.3 Execution and Key Operational Decisions

The Federal Ministry of Education provided the grant funding and developed the platform, which includes Google Gemini AI evaluation and one-year free Gemini Pro licences for all eligible students. Afara Initiative is the partner responsible for incubation and ecosystem support, as well as monitoring and evaluation. The Bank of Industry contributed to disbursement infrastructure and due diligence capacity.

The portal was operational before the formal launch date, enabling live application data to be reported at the launch ceremony itself — a deliberate credibility-building decision that demonstrated the programme's operational readiness. The communications strategy targeted all 36 states and achieved near-gender parity in applications (52% male, 48% female).

The award ceremony was held on Sunday 29 March 2026, with 45 beneficiaries selected. The programme has transitioned from intake to active incubation, with milestone-linked



2 out of the 45 Beneficiaries of the Student Venture Capital Grant (SVCG).



3.4 Partners and Their Roles

PARTNER	ROLE
Federal Ministry of Education (FME)	Grant funder; overall programme authority
TETFund)	Oversight and funding agency
Bank of Industry (BOI)	Disbursement infrastructure; due diligence support; pathway to future debt and equity financing for high-performing ventures
Google	Gemini AI for platform evaluation; one-year Gemini Pro licences for all eligible students; Google for Startups Accelerator access for selected winners
Afara Initiative	Incubation support; mentorship networks; entrepreneur ecosystem connections; monitoring and evaluation

3.5 Verification Framework

Identity Verification: NIN-BVN integration is required for all S-VCG applicants before processing. Confirms identity against the national biometric database and provides verified bank accounts for direct grant disbursement. CAC company registration is required for all projects to ensure a clear commercialisation pathway.

AI-Assisted Platform Screening: Automated first-stage evaluation of all applications. 100% of applications received AI-assisted initial

screening within 72 hours, with zero system downtime recorded.

Human Evaluation Panel: Shortlisted candidates assessed by 10 human evaluators followed by a formal evaluation committee comprising venture capitalists, industry experts, and academic leaders — providing expert judgement at each progressive stage.

Milestone-Linked Disbursement: Subsequent grant tranches are released only against verified venture progress milestones, ensuring beneficiaries remain actively developing their businesses.

3.6 Verified Results

INDICATOR	DATA / STATUS
Official Launch	Monday 8 December 2025, TETFund Auditorium, Abuja
Applications	30,639 from 404 institutions
Institutions Covered	346 public; 56 private — all 36 states and FCT
Completed Submissions	3,014



Finalists	65 startup students and businesses
Beneficiaries Selected	45 startup students and businesses
Grant Ceiling	Up to N50 million per venture (equity-free)
Total Fund Commitment	N2.5 billion
Student Benefit (all applicants)	One-year Google Gemini Pro licence; access to incubation labs and mentors
Gender Distribution	52% male, 48% female
Award Ceremony	Sunday 29 March 2026
First Disbursements	Scheduled Q2 2026

3.7 Challenges and Responses

Initial Geographic Credibility Gap: Early application volumes were not reflective of all geo-zones, reflecting scepticism based on previous unfulfilled government programme announcements.

Response: Continuous engagement with applicants who submitted helped demonstrate the government's commitment. The live coverage of the award day further reinforced transparency around the initiative, and the 45 beneficiaries will serve as visible champions for the 2026 cohort.

System Design for Evaluation: The portal required modifications to support the evaluation committee's aggregated scoring process.

Response: Changes were made to the portal to enable committee members to conduct structured, aggregated evaluations.

3.8 Next Steps

Q2 2026 Disbursements: First grant tranches to be released to the 45 selected ventures, marking S-VCG's transition from intake to active venture support.

Intensive Incubation: Each beneficiary matched with a mentor; incubation space provided through Afara Initiative or institutional Innovation and Enterprise Offices.

Milestone Tracking: Quarterly progress reviews for each venture, with subsequent tranches triggered by verified milestones.

BOI Financing Pathway: Bank of Industry's debt and equity financing options are activated for commercially viable ventures completing the initial grant phase.

2026 Expansion: Roadshows featuring the 45 beneficiaries to demonstrate the value and impact of the programme, with a focus on increasing participating schools and student numbers.





PROGRAMME 4

National Education Data Infrastructure (NEDI)

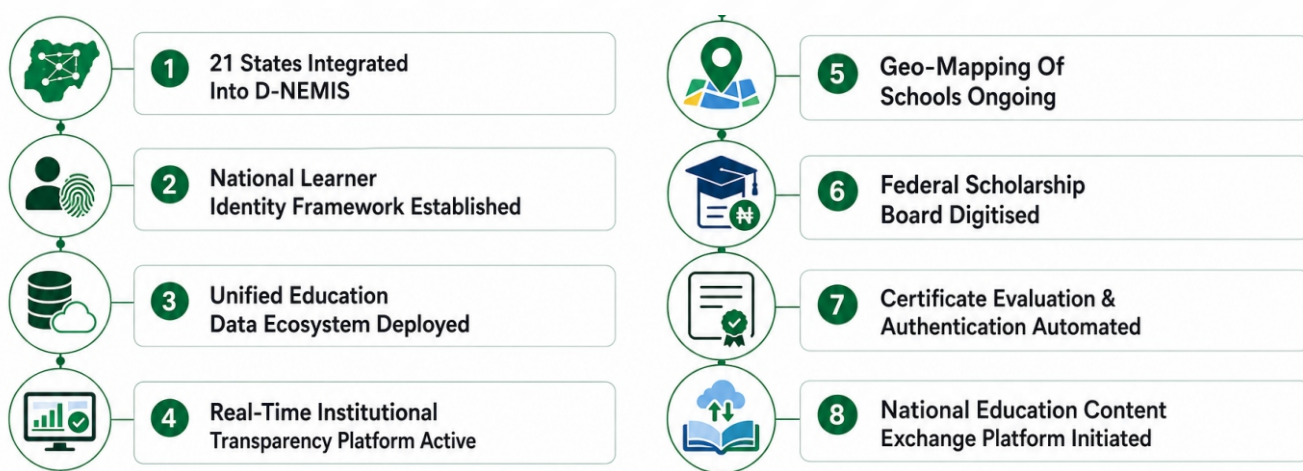
4.1 Programme Background

Nigeria's education system had no unified, real-time national database. Data was fragmented across incompatible agency-specific systems, paper records, and inconsistent submissions. Policymakers operated with outdated,

unverified, or incomplete information. There was no system capable of tracking a learner's complete educational journey from basic education through to tertiary graduation. Asset diversion, ghost students, and poor resource allocation persisted because there was no infrastructure to detect them.

Building Nigeria's Unified Education Data Infrastructure

NEDI — KEY SNAPSHOT



NEDI is a flagship initiative under NESRI's Education Data and Digitalisation pillar, led by the Honourable Minister and coordinated by SPOIU. Its purpose is to solve Nigeria's fragmented education data landscape with a unified, real-time national education ecosystem capable of providing a comprehensive view of every learner's educational journey — from foundational learning through tertiary education, skills development, financing, certification, and national service.

Beyond serving as a standalone data initiative,

NEDI functions as the central interoperability framework connecting major education and government data systems, including D-NEMIS, JAMB, WAEC, NECO, NELFUND, and NYSC, among others. Through this integrated architecture, the Ministry is building a single national visibility framework for learners, institutions, educators, financing, and outcomes across the education sector.

SPOIU's role is implementation governance and inter-agency coordination, while the digital platforms are built by specialist technical teams.



NEDI encompasses six interconnected components, each addressing a distinct dimension of Nigeria's education data infrastructure:

4.2 The NEDI Components

Component A: D-NEMIS (Digitised Nigerian Education Management Information System)

D-NEMIS is a transformative learner-tracking platform that follows every student from basic through secondary education in real time. It is a significantly enhanced and digitised evolution of the legacy NEMIS (Nigeria Education Management Information System) and its Annual School Census, providing far greater depth, real-time capability, and national coverage.

D-NEMIS geo-maps all schools nationwide and assigns every learner a National Learner Identity Number (N-LIN) — a unique persistent identifier that tracks their complete educational journey. It is built on integration with the National Identification Number (NIN) system managed

by NIMC, ensuring every student record links to a verified national identity. As of March 2026, D-NEMIS has achieved data coverage across 21 states, with full 36-state coverage targeted by end-2026.

The platform has been significantly enhanced to capture comprehensive data on teachers and the usability of infrastructure across schools nationwide. Beyond basic enrolment statistics, the system now collects detailed information on teacher availability, qualifications, subject distribution, and deployment patterns providing a clearer picture of human resource gaps in the education sector. D-NEMIS also captures real-time data on school infrastructure, including the condition and functionality of classrooms, laboratories, water and sanitation facilities, and other critical learning resources. By assessing infrastructure usability — not just availability — the platform supports evidence-based decisions on rehabilitation, resource allocation, and policy prioritisation. D-NEMIS also collects school safety data, feeding directly into the Ministry's School Safety Portal to help manage security risks across threatened schools.



(L-R): Vanessa Lee, UNICEF; Dr. Angela Ajala, ES of NCCE, Prof. Dantani Ibrahim Wushishi, Registrar NECO; Imaan Sulaiman-Ibrahim, Minister of Women Affairs; Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, CON, Minister of Education; Dr. Olubunmi Tunji-Ojo, Minister of Interior; Brig. Olakunle Oluseye Nafiu, DG of NYSC; Dr. Iyela Ajayi, ES NSSEC.



Component B: Federal Tertiary Institutions Governance and Transparency Portal (FTIGTP)

FTIGTP was launched on Tuesday 4th November 2025 at the Federal Ministry of Education Headquarters, Abuja.

It is a unified platform providing real-time access to data on student enrolment, budget allocations, research grants, TETFund allocations, NELFUND interventions, and institutional performance indicators for every federal university, polytechnic, and college of education. The portal is accessible at transparency.education.gov.ng.

The Honourable Minister made clear that FTIGTP is not merely a database but a reform tool: future government funding and interventions will be tied to institutional compliance with mandatory annual data submission and transparency requirements. Institutions failing to comply face direct funding consequences.

Component C: Federal Scholarship Board (FSB) Portal Digitalisation

SPOIU coordinates the digitalisation of Nigeria's Federal Scholarship Board, integrating it within the NEDI ecosystem. The FSB online portal manages Bilateral Education Awards and Nigerian government scholarship programmes. Through NEDI's data infrastructure, scholarship applications, selections, and disbursements are linked to the national learner identity framework — preventing duplication, ensuring compliance, and providing verifiable scholarship records across the system.

Component D: Education Support Services (ESS)

The Education Support Services (ESS) platform digitises and modernises key citizen-facing services within the Federal Ministry of

Education, including Certificate Evaluation and Authentication.

The full automation of the Certificate Evaluation and Authentication processes within the Federal Ministry of Education has replaced the largely manual, in-person system with a seamless end-to-end digital platform. Applicants can now submit requests, upload credentials, make payments, and track application status remotely. The automation has significantly improved service delivery by reducing processing time, eliminating bottlenecks, minimising human intervention, and curbing fraudulent practices.

The automated system also provides a structured, reliable way to capture and analyse data on Nigerians seeking to travel abroad for education and employment. By integrating applicant data into the broader NEDI framework, the Ministry is better positioned to generate real-time insights into migration trends, academic mobility, and skills export — supporting evidence-based policymaking and strengthening national workforce planning.

Component E: IXP (National Internet Exchange Point for Education Content)

The development of a National Internet Exchange Point for Education Content (IXP) was initiated to serve as a centralised digital repository for high-quality learning materials. The platform hosts curriculum-aligned content from primary through tertiary levels, including videos, audio lessons, e-books, and interactive resources. By aggregating content from government platforms and development partners into a single, well-structured repository, the IXP ensures standardisation, quality assurance, and accessible delivery for learners and educators nationwide.

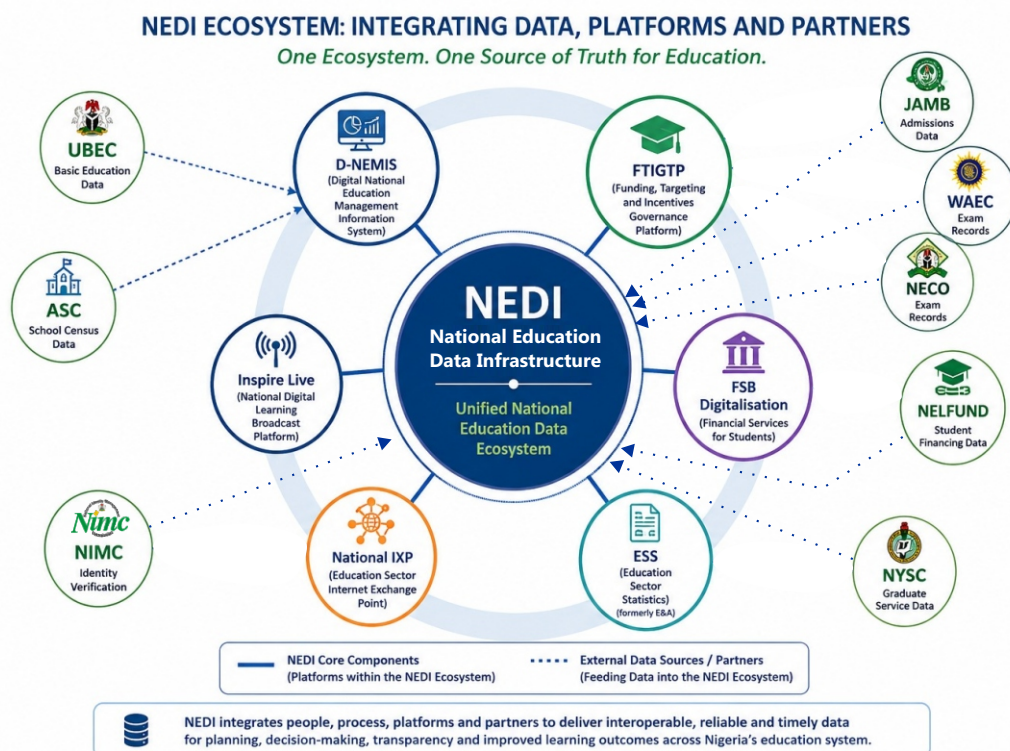


Component F: Inspire Live

The Inspire Live platform was conceptualised and deployed to address the persistent shortage and uneven distribution of qualified teachers across Nigeria, from Primary One through Senior Secondary School. The initiative uses digital technology to deliver real-time, curriculum-aligned lessons to students nationwide, ensuring that learners — regardless

of location — have access to high-quality instruction through centralised delivery by experienced, qualified teachers. Inspire Live is particularly targeted at underserved and hard-to-reach areas.

Inspire Live is integrated into the broader NEDI ecosystem to provide data-driven insights into student engagement, learning outcomes, and subject performance across regions.



This enables the Ministry to identify learning gaps, monitor teaching effectiveness, and deploy targeted interventions. The platform also supports teacher capacity building by exposing educators to best practices in lesson delivery and digital pedagogy.

4.3 NEDI and the Almajiri Commission

Significant progress was made in mapping and tracking out-of-school children and geolocating schools within their communities. Leveraging DNEMIS, geospatial technologies, and the learner identity framework, the Ministry

developed a data-driven approach to identify, locate, and profile out-of-school children across various states, capturing critical information such as age, location, parental details, and proximity to the nearest schools.

This mapping exercise enables targeted interventions by connecting out-of-school children to nearby schools and appropriate learning pathways, including formal, non-formal, and alternative education programmes. By embedding this data in the NEDI ecosystem, the Ministry can monitor enrolment efforts, track reintegration progress, and inform policy decisions to reduce Nigeria's out-of-school children population nationwide.



4.4 Execution and Key Operational Decisions

The Honourable Minister established the 25-member NEDI Implementation Committee in January 2025, bringing together heads of all agencies whose data systems need to be integrated into the national database: UBEC, NUC, NBTE, NCCE, JAMB, NIMC, NELFUND, and TETFund. The NEDI office under SPOIU oversees the committee's work plan, monitors action items, and escalates inter-agency conflicts to the Minister's office. Key coordination actions

include establishing NIN integration with NIMC, linking NEDI with NELFUND's student loan database, and managing the progressive onboarding of state EMIS systems to D-NEMIS. A standard API schema was developed for all agencies to enable seamless data integration. A phased state integration approach replaced the original simultaneous rollout after data format and capacity disparities between state systems became apparent. The UNICEF system was also adopted for expansion, providing significant structure that accelerated time to market and generated substantial cost savings for the Ministry.

4.5 Partners and Their Roles

INDICATOR	DATA / STATUS
UBEC	Basic education data source; state EMIS integration coordination
NUC	University data integration; institutional data standards
NBTE & NCCE	Polytechnic and College of Education data integration
JAMB, WAEC & NECO	Tertiary education data; admissions and examination data integration
NIMC	NIN verification; identity authentication for all learner records
NELFUND	Student loan database linkage
TETFund	Funding vehicle
NITDA	Nigeria Education Data Bundle; cybersecurity frameworks for platforms
State Governments / SUBEBs	State EMIS data provision; D-NEMIS integration
Mastercard Foundation / World Bank	EdTech strategy co-creation
Amazon Web Services (AWS) Academy	Digital skills expansion for teachers and students at tertiary institutions
UNICEF	Technical collaboration; EMIS system architecture; data standards
Ernst and Young	Technical solution provider



4.5.1 AWS Academy and Cloud Computing Partnership

As part of the broader Education Data and Digitalisation agenda under NEDI, SPOIU expanded collaboration with Amazon Web Services (AWS) Academy to strengthen cloud computing, AI, and digital infrastructure competencies across Nigeria's tertiary education ecosystem. The partnership provides participating institutions with access to cloud computing learning resources, digital skills training, and industry-aligned certification pathways for educators and students.

The initiative supports the Ministry's wider objective of preparing Nigerian learners and institutions for participation in an increasingly digital and knowledge-driven economy, while also strengthening institutional capacity for technology-enabled teaching, learning, and research. By March 2026, over 109 institutions had been enrolled into the AWS Academy ecosystem, establishing a foundation for future cohort expansion and wider digital skills

adoption across the education sector.

Digital Training Academy (DTA)

In the launch of the Digital Training Academy (DTA), the FME partnered with Coursera, on a major digital skills initiative that will provide 36,000 young Nigerians with free access to global training in high-demand fields including artificial intelligence, data science, cybersecurity, cloud computing, and software engineering. The programme is fully funded by the government through Coursera and Pluralsight licenses, enabling participants to earn globally recognised certifications without cost barriers. Implemented with the support of the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) and Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH), the initiative aims to bridge Nigeria's digital skills gap by expanding access to quality technology education, especially for youths beyond major urban centres, and preparing a new generation of Nigerians to compete in the global digital economy.



Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa CON, Honourable Minister of Education, at Amazon Web Services (AWS) Headquarters in Washington DC, speaking to young Nigerians about the education reform under President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, GCFR, 's Renewed Hope Agenda.



4.6 Verification Framework

Identity & School Verification: All student records in D-NEMIS are linked to NIN through NIMC integration. Each school is assigned a unique school identifier. N-LIN is assigned to every learner for persistent tracking across education levels.

Institutional Compliance Monitoring: FTIGTP tracks mandatory data submission compliance across all 136 federal tertiary institutions. Non-

compliance is flagged for funding consequence review.

Data Audit: The NEDI ICT Directorate and NEMIS Unit conduct ongoing data audits across connected institutions and states, maintaining verified baseline datasets for policy planning.

Monitoring & Evaluation: Real-time geospatial dashboards and trend analysis provide policymakers with actionable intelligence on enrolment, dropout, transition rates, and infrastructure gaps.

4.7 Verified Results

INDICATOR	DATA / STATUS
NEDI Implementation Committee Inaugurated	January 2025
Committee Chair	Honourable Minister of Education
States with D-NEMIS Data Coverage	21 states (March 2026)
Student Records Targeted	31 million+ across Nigeria
Schools Targeted	217,000+ across all tiers
Teachers Recorded	945,000
Learner Identity	National Learner Identity Number (N-LIN) introduced
NIN Integration	Live — all records linked to NIN via NIMC
Transparency Portal Launched	4 November 2025 (transparency.education.gov.ng)
FTIGTP — Federal Universities Onboarded	47 of 67
FTIGTP — Polytechnics Onboarded	35 of 39
FTIGTP — Colleges of Education Onboarded	25 of 30
Schools Internet-Connected (via GenU/Airtel)	1,027+ schools
DTA Cohort 1 Licences	20,000 licences
DTA Cohort 2 Licences	12,000 licences
AWS Academy — Institutions Enrolled	Over 109 institutions



4.8 Challenges and Responses

Fragmented State EMIS Systems: 36 state governments manage incompatible data systems built at different times with different standards.

Response: Phased integration model with NEDI acting as an interoperability layer; technically stronger states integrated first; a standard API schema developed to enable seamless data exchange.

Power and Connectivity: Many institutions lack stable electricity and internet for real-time data submission.

Response: Offline-capable data collection tools; solar integration planning for Phase 2 deployments.

Institutional Compliance Resistance: Some tertiary institutions are slow to submit required data to FTIGTP.

Response: Compliance tied to funding consequences, with the Honourable Minister making clear that future government interventions will be linked to transparency metrics.

Data Quality: Legacy data from some states is insufficient for D-NEMIS integration without significant pre-processing.

Response: Technical support teams deployed; NIMC data harmonisation required for all new learner registrations.

4.9 Next Steps

Full 36-State D-NEMIS Coverage: Operational dashboards for all state ministries and SUBEBs by end-2026; N-LIN assigned to all students entering the system from the 2026/2027 session.

National EdTech Strategy Publication: Finalisation and national dissemination of the governing framework for all technology-enabled education investment in Nigeria, co-developed with the Ministry of Communications.

AFD \$40M Blueprint-ICT-Dev Project: ICT infrastructure upgrades in 10 universities, including high-speed connectivity, digital learning management systems, computer laboratories, and hybrid teaching facilities.

FTIGTP Maturation: Transition to a real-time institutional audit tool with quarterly data update requirements and automated compliance tracking.

AWS Academy Cohort 3: Commence preparations for the next cohort of AWS Academy, building on the 109+ institutions already enrolled.





PROGRAMME 5

Tertiary Institution Staff Support Fund (TISSF)

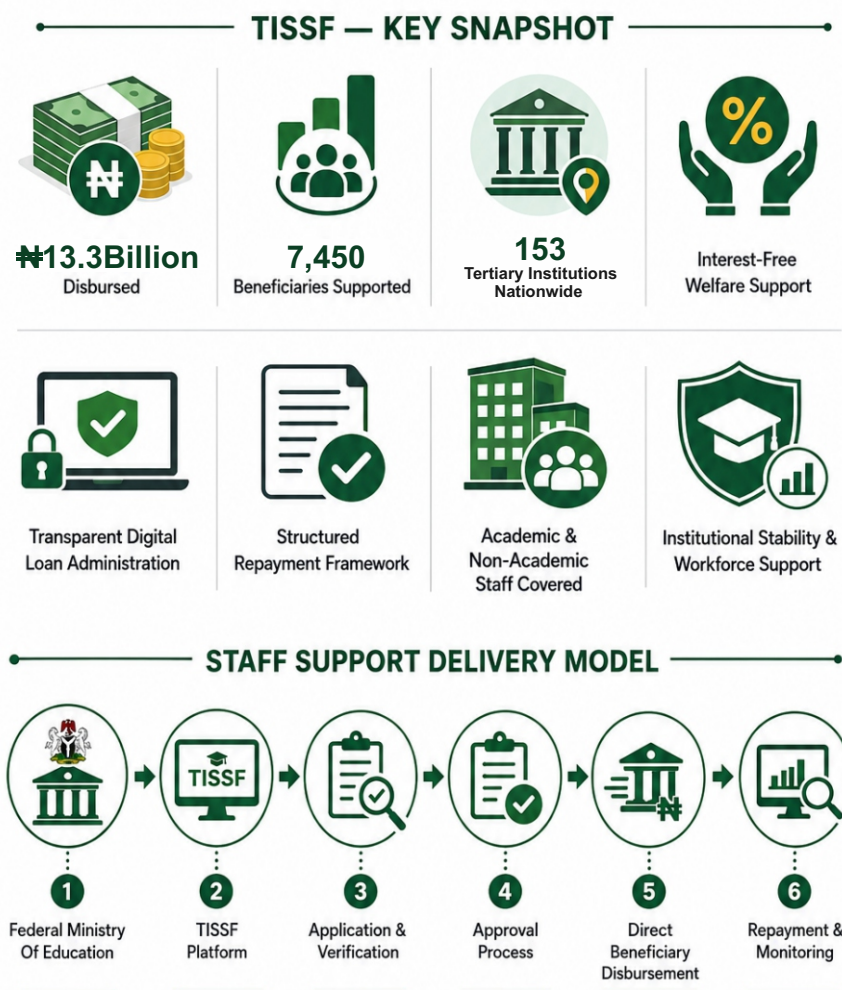
5.1 Programme Background

Academic and non-academic staff at Nigeria's tertiary institutions face significant financial pressures: rising cost of living, inadequate housing, limited access to affordable credit, and financial stress that directly reduces productivity, morale, and retention. Studies indicate that institutions without structured welfare support face 37% higher staff turnover. Many staff had turned to high-interest commercial lenders, compounding their

financial vulnerability.

TISSF was launched on Thursday 14th August 2025 at the TETFund Auditorium, Abuja, as an interest-free loan scheme for academic and non-academic staff in Nigeria's tertiary institutions. It operates under NESRI's Education Quality Assurance pillar, on the understanding that institutional stability and staff welfare are prerequisites for sustained educational quality. The programme is implemented in partnership with the Bank of Industry.

Supporting The People Who Sustain Nigeria's Higher Education System





5.2 Design Approach

The interest-free design — 0% lending at up to ₦10 million, capped at 33.3% of gross annual pay, repayable over five years with a one-year moratorium — distinguishes TISSF from commercial lending and makes it genuinely accessible to staff who cannot afford market interest rates.

The payroll deduction repayment mechanism was designed to be automatic, reducing both default risk and administrative overhead simultaneously. This also protects beneficiaries from repayment management burdens while maintaining clean fund flows for the revolving architecture.

A revolving fund model was built into the original programme design: as the first cohort of beneficiaries completes the one-year moratorium and repayments begin, those funds replenish the pool available to new applicants. This architecture was designed from the outset to ensure TISSF is a permanent facility rather than a one-time disbursement.

Permitted loan utilisations were deliberately broad to serve the diverse financial needs of tertiary staff: housing and accommodation support; transport including EVs, tricycles, and

CNG conversion; small businesses and agriculture (poultry, farming, processing); academic advancement and certifications; and medical expenses and family emergencies.

5.3 Execution and Key Operational Decisions

The TISSF programme has an information portal at <https://tissf.education.gov.ng> where academic and non-academic staff of tertiary institutions can access all necessary information. The loan processing portal, developed in partnership with the Bank of Industry and accessible at <https://tissf.boi.ng/login>, includes built-in eligibility screening that automates verification of confirmed full-time status, TETFund beneficiary institution status, minimum five years to retirement, and recognised staff association membership.

SPOIU, together with the Bank of Industry, manages the institutional onboarding process, registering university bursaries as processing partners responsible for verifying applicant employment details and managing repayment deductions. The Bank of Industry holds the programme funds and handles loan disbursements; SPOIU serves as the coordination layer between BOI and institutions.



Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, CON, Honouable Minister of Education and key stakeholders at the National Launch of TISSF in Abuja.



With N15 billion disbursed to BOI and N13.3 billion disbursed to 7,450 beneficiaries for the 2025 programme, TISSF has already delivered a substantial welfare impact in its first cycle. The remaining balance is being processed through the institutional onboarding pipeline.

5.4 Partners and Their Roles

PARTNER	ROLE
Federal Ministry of Education (FME)	Programme authority; policy design; institutional oversight
Bank of Industry (BOI)	Fund custodian; loan disbursement to verified beneficiaries; financial infrastructure and loan management
University Bursaries	Employment verification; repayment deduction management; institutional liaison
Staff Records Targeted	31 million+ across Nigeria
Staff Unions (ASUU, NASU, SSANU, etc.)	Member mobilisation; verification of association membership for eligibility
Kaizenest Consultancy	Monitoring and evaluation

5.5 Verification Framework

Identity Verification: NIN-BVN integration required for all applicants. Confirms identity against the national biometric database; provides a verified bank account for direct disbursement.

Eligibility Screening: Built-in portal automation verifies confirmed full-time status, minimum five years to retirement, and recognised staff association membership before any application proceeds.

Institutional Verification: Tertiary bursaries independently verify employment details, salary

data, and repayment capacity as part of the processing workflow.

Payment Verification: All loans disbursed directly from BOI to verified beneficiary bank accounts. No cash payments; no third-party intermediaries. Full audit trail maintained.

Repayment Monitoring: Payroll deduction mechanism tracked through institutional bursaries. SPOIU and selected monitoring and evaluation partners monitor deduction rates and flag institutions with processing delays.

5.6 Partners and Their Roles

INDICATOR	DATA/STATUS
Official Launch	Thursday 14 August 2025, TETFund Auditorium, Abuja
Implementing Partners	FME; TETFund; Bank of Industry
Total Applications Submitted	42,000+



Applications Approved	28,987
Loan Offers Sent	8,604
Institutions on Platform	153
Total Disbursed to Beneficiaries	N13.3 billion to 7,450 beneficiaries
Loan Terms	0% interest; up to N10 million; 33.3% gross pay cap
Repayment Structure	5 years; 1-year moratorium; payroll deduction
Repayment Structure	5 years; 1-year moratorium; payroll deduction
Information Portal	https://tissf.education.gov.ng
Processing Portal	https://tissf.boi.ng/login
Utilisation Areas	Housing; transport; agriculture/business; professional growth; welfare

5.7 Challenges and Responses

Bursar Onboarding Pace: In the first year of implementation, bursars had challenges understanding their specific role in the processing workflow.

Response: SPOIU and BOI deployed dedicated support to each institution's bursar; the conditional access model was refined to accelerate application processing.

Staff Awareness: Despite strong overall uptake, a significant proportion of eligible staff in some

institutions were unaware of the programme.

Response: Union partnerships mobilised for member communication; SPOIU coordinated with heads of institutions on internal communications.

Eligibility Verification Disputes: Some applicants contested automated eligibility rejections.

Response: SPOIU and BOI continue to explain the process to institutions and refine the system based on field experience.



5.8 Next Steps

Revolving Fund Activation: As the first TISSF beneficiary cohort exits the moratorium in mid-2026, automated repayment deductions will be activated through institutional bursaries, demonstrating the programme's self-sustaining financial architecture.

Application Reopening: The 2026 portal opens in June for new applications with the 2026 fund. In addition, repayments commence in 2026, which will see the fund size grow.

Bursar Coverage Expansion: Continued onboarding of remaining institutions to close

the gap between applications submitted and applications processed.

Impact Assessment: Structured survey of first-cohort beneficiaries on loan utilisation, financial stress reduction, and institutional retention — providing the evidence base for programme scaling.

Advocacy and Awareness: Bursar onboarding exercise and roadshow to educate institutions about the programme and accelerate processing capacity.



Former Director of Polytechnic Education, FME; Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, CON, Minister of Education; Senator; Hon Abubakar Fulata House committee chairman on Universities; Dr. Olasupo Olusi, MD and CEO of Bank of Industry (BOI); Engr. Ali Alimasuya Rabi, Chairman Nigerian Society of Engineers; Sunday Asefon, Special Advisor to the President on Student Engagement.



TISSF

TERTIARY INSTITUTION STAFF SUPPORT FUND

Empowering Academic and Non-Academic Tertiary Institution Staff

The Tertiary Institutions Staff Support Fund (TISSF) is a Federal Ministry of Education & Tetfund initiative designed to enhance the well-being, career growth and financial independence of Staff in Nigerian tertiary institutions.



SECTION 6

CROSS-PROGRAMME OVERSIGHT

6.1 Cross-Programme Risk Management

Managing five programmes simultaneously requires SPOIU to maintain a consolidated view of risks and interdependencies across the portfolio. The unit employs a risk matrix for each programme tracking key implementation risks — partner non-performance, platform failures, verification gaps, uptake shortfalls — against likelihood and impact, with mitigation responsibility assigned to specific team members.

Digital infrastructure gaps in partner institutions have been the most persistent cross-programme risk, affecting both Diaspora Bridge connectivity and TVET biometric synchronisation.

The gaps refer to three specific, recurring problems found across partner institutions:

1. Unreliable or absent internet connectivity:

Many accredited TVET training centres — particularly in rural LGAs and underserved states — lack stable broadband. This meant biometric attendance devices couldn't transmit records to the central disbursement system in real time, creating delays in stipend processing. For

Diaspora Bridge, the same problem prevented institutions from joining scheduled live virtual lectures, directly reducing student participation numbers.

2. Unstable power supply: A significant proportion of public tertiary institutions and training centres experience frequent electricity outages. Biometric devices, routers, and the computers needed for virtual lecture access all depend on stable power. Without it, digital systems — however well-designed — become intermittently non-functional.

3. Insufficient device and hardware capacity:

Some institutions lacked enough functional computers or smart devices for students to participate in virtual Diaspora Bridge sessions at scale, and some training centres had no dedicated infrastructure for running biometric verification equipment.

The consistent response across programmes has been offline-capable tools with connectivity-triggered synchronisation, supported by on-ground representatives during transition periods.



6.2 Course Corrections Across the Portfolio

PROGRAMME	COURSE CORRECTION	REASON
TVET	Shifted from new infrastructure construction to accreditation of existing private centres	Faster national coverage at lower capital cost; all-state reach achieved within first cohort
	Biometric attendance validation introduced	To ensure stipend payments go only to genuine participants and that centres conducting actual training are paid
	Selection modified to prioritise proximity to registered address	Attendance was affected where trainees were assigned to centres far from their location
S-VCG	10 human evaluators deployed for post-AI, pre-committee evaluation stage	To ensure all submissions received the appropriate level of review before the evaluation committee
	Portal redesigned for aggregated scoring by evaluation committee	To enable committee members to conduct structured evaluations with consolidated scoring
NEDI	Phased state integration replaced simultaneous rollout	Data format and capacity disparities between state systems made simultaneous integration unworkable
	UNICEF system adopted for expansion	Provided significant structure, accelerated time to market, and generated substantial cost savings
	Standard API schema developed across all agencies	To enable seamless data integration and interoperability across the national education data ecosystem
Diaspora Bridge	Transitioned to blended asynchronous delivery model	Time zone misalignment between North American experts and Nigerian institutions produced high live-session no-show rates
TISSF	Model for fund distribution refined	To ensure the maximum amount of the fund is disbursed to eligible beneficiaries in the shortest time



6.3 Milestone Enforcement

SPOIU enforces programme milestones through its partnership agreements, which specify that funding releases and continued programme participation are conditional on achieving defined delivery targets. TVET training centre payments are conditional on verified biometric

attendance records. TISSF institutional access is conditional on qualified bursar onboarding. Diaspora Bridge expert matching is conditional on institutions completing the skills gap survey. This milestone-linked accountability model creates active delivery obligations for partners and institutions, structurally reducing the need for reactive sanction processes.



Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, CON, Honourable Minister of Education, Prof Suwaiba Said Ahmed, Minister of State for Education, and beneficiaries of the TISSF staff welfare and institutional productivity support at Federal University of Technology, Akure (FUTA)



Dr Maruf Tunji Alausa, CON, Honourable Minister of Education, Prof. Suwaiba Said Ahmad, Honourable Minister of State of Education, SVCG winners and others at the SVCG Bootcamp



Honourable Minister of Education visits TVET Centre - AFS Vocational Hub in Abuja.



Honourable Minister of Education visits TVET Centre for Animal husbandry in Abuja.





SECTION 7

PORTFOLIO PERFORMANCE SUMMARY

The following table presents the consolidated performance position across SPOIU's five programmes as of March 2026.

5.4 Partners and Their Roles

PROGRAMME	LAUNCH DATE	KEY METRIC	STATUS
TVET	Friday 30th May 2025	160,000 trainees enrolled; N1.49B stipends disbursed and N4.9B disbursed to centres as at May 2026 end of reporting period	Active — Cohort 2 registration opened April 2026
Diaspora Bridge	Monday 28th Jul 2025	115 experts matched; 1,656+ students reached; 36 lecture hours delivered	Active — scaling to 7–10 sessions/week from Q2 2026
S-VCG	Monday 8th Dec 2025	17,914 registrations; 45 beneficiaries selected; N2.5B committed	Active — incubation phase; Q2 2026 disbursements
NEDI	Jan 2025 (Committee)	21 states on D-NEMIS; FTIGTP live; 109+ institutions on AWS Academy	Active — scaling to 36-state coverage by end-2026
NEDI	Thursday 14th Aug 2025	7,450 beneficiaries; N13.3B disbursed; 153 institutions	Active — revolving fund activation mid-2026



Conclusion

This report is a record of execution. Between May 2025 and May 2026, SPOIU designed, launched, and operationalised five programmes simultaneously across four NESRI pillars — enrolling trainees in 690 centres across all 36 states and the FCT, matching diaspora experts with 46 institutions, delivering the first federal equity-free student venture grants in Nigeria's history to 45 student companies, building a national learner tracking system across 21 states, and extending interest-free welfare financing to over 7,450 tertiary staff.

The common thread running through every SPOIU programme is consistent: digital-first delivery, direct-to-beneficiary payment, identity-verified accountability, and milestone-linked disbursement. These are the operational principles that determine whether public resources produce public results or are consumed by the inefficiencies and leakages that have historically undermined large-scale government programmes in Nigeria.

The first implementation cycle has validated these principles across five distinct programme types — a training programme, a knowledge exchange programme, a venture funding programme, a data infrastructure programme, and a staff welfare fund. Each required different

partner architectures, different verification systems, and different accountability mechanisms. SPOIU built all five simultaneously.

Cohort 2 of TVET, the first physical Diaspora Bridge expert visits, the first S-VCG grant disbursements, NEDI's path to full national 36-state coverage, and the TISSF's first revolving fund activation all represent the scaling of what has been proven to work. SPOIU enters this next phase with a documented track record, tested systems, and a clear understanding of what implementation at a national scale requires.

Finally, the programmes are the critical national development initiatives under the Presidential Renewed Hope Agenda that aim to strengthen Nigeria's education system by improving access, quality, innovation, and employability outcomes. For students, the initiatives provide better learning opportunities, skills development, and stronger pathways to employment and entrepreneurship. Tertiary institutions benefit from improved institutional capacity, innovation support, and alignment with national development priorities, while academic and administrative staff gain opportunities for professional development, improved working systems and welfare. Overall, the programmes promote a more responsive, technology-driven, and globally competitive education ecosystem that supports national growth.

Special Programs Operations and Implementation Unit (SPOIU)

Federal Ministry of Education, Abuja, Federal Republic of Nigeria

May 2026



ANNEX A

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS AND PROGRAMME ROLES

PARTNER	PROGRAMME	ROLE
Afara Initiative	S-VCG	Incubation support; entrepreneur ecosystem connections; monitoring and evaluation
Amazon Web Services (AWS)	NEDI	Digital skills training for teachers and students; cloud computing competencies
Bank of Industry (BOI)	TISSF; S-VCG	Fund custodian; loan/grant disbursement; due diligence; future debt/equity pathways
Coursera and Pluralsight	DTA	A major digital skills initiative that will provide 36,000 young Nigerians with free access to global training in high-demand fields, including artificial intelligence, data science, cybersecurity, cloud computing and software engineering
COSCEN	TVET; NEDI	Federal-state coordination forum
Google	S-VCG	AI evaluation (Gemini); Gemini Pro licences; Google for Startups Accelerator
JAMB	NEDI	Examination and credential data
Kaizenest Consultancy	TISSF	Monitoring and evaluation
Mastercard Foundation	NEDI	Mastercard Foundation EdTech strategy co-creation and financing
NABTEB	TVET	NSQ certification; assessment and examination authority
NIMC (National Identity Management Commission)	TVET; NEDI; TISSF; S-VCG	NIN verification for identity authentication across all financial programmes
NBTE (National Board for Technical Education)	TVET; NEDI	Training centre accreditation; national occupational standards; polytechnic data
NCCE (National Commission for Colleges of Education)	NEDI	Colleges of Education data integration
NELFUND (Nigerian Education Loan Fund)	TVET	Stipend disbursement to trainees; training centre fee payments



NiDCom (Nigerians in Diaspora Commission)	Diaspora Bridge	Diaspora professional database; community outreach
NIMC (National Identity Management Commission)	TVET; NEDI; TISSF; S-VCG	NIN verification for identity authentication across all financial programmes
NITDA	NEDI	Nigeria Education Data Bundle; cybersecurity frameworks for platforms
NUC (National Universities Commission)	NEDI; Diaspora Bridge	University data integration; institutional quality standards
State Education Ministries	TVET; NEDI	State-level implementation; EMIS data provisions
Staff Unions (ASUU, NASU, SSANU)	TISSF	Member mobilisation; staff association membership verification
TETFund (Tertiary Education Trust Fund)	All five programmes	Oversight and funding vehicle (FME-SPOIU budget allocation)
UBEC (Universal Basic Education)	NEDI	Basic education data source; state EMIS integration
UNICEF	NEDI	UNICEF Technical collaboration; EMIS architecture; data standards
WAEC / NECO NEDI	NEDI	Tertiary admissions data integration
World Bank	NEDI	EdTech strategy financing and co-creation



ANNEX B

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	FULL NAME
ASUU	Academic Staff Union of Universities
AWS	Amazon Web Services
BOI	Bank of Industry
CAC	Corporate Affairs Commission
CBT	Computer-Based Testing
COE	College of Education
COSCEN	Committee of States' Commissioners of Education
D-NEMIS	Digitised Nigerian Education Management Information System
DTA	Digital Training Academy
E&A	Evaluation and Authentication
FCT	Federal Capital Territory
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
FSB	Federal Scholarship Board
FTIGTP	Federal Tertiary Institutions Governance and Transparency Portal
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (German Development Agency)
IXP	Internet Exchange Point
ITEES	Institute of Technical Education and Educational Services (Singapore)
JAMB	Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board
LGA	Local Government Area
MAN	Manufacturers Association of Nigeria
NABTEB	National Business and Technical Examinations Board
NASU	Non-Academic Staff Union
NBTE	National Board for Technical Education
NCCE	National Commission for Colleges of Education
NECO	National Examinations Council
NEDI	National Education Data Initiative
NELFUND	Nigerian Education Loan Fund
NEMIS	Nigeria Education Management Information System



NESRI	Nigeria Education Sector Renewal Initiative
NiDCom	Nigerians in Diaspora Commission
NIMC	National Identity Management Commission
NIN	National Identification Number
N-LIN	National Learner Identity Number
NSQ	National Skills Qualification
NITDA	National Information Technology Development Agency
NUC	National Universities Commission
NgREN	Nigeria Research and Education Network
PMO	Performance Monitoring Officer
SMEDAN	Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria
SPOIU	Special Programs Operations and Implementation Unit
SSANU	Senior Staff Association of Nigerian Universities
STEMM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medical Sciences
TERAS	Tertiary Education, Research, Applications and Services Sciences
TETFund	Tertiary Education Trust Fund
TISSF	Tertiary Institution Staff Support Fund
TVET	Technical and Vocational Education and Training
UBEC	Universal Basic Education Commission
WAEC	West African Examinations Council



A production of the Federal Ministry of Education
2025-2026