



RIAH

RE-ROOTING IN
AFRICAN HISTORY

EDUCATION SUMMIT

AFRICAN-CENTERED EDUCATION :
A PATHWAY TO EQUITY, EXCELLENCE
AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

COMMUNIQUE

PARTNERS:





Re-Rooting in African History Education Summit: African-Centred Education: A Pathway to Equity, Excellence & Social Transformation (c) is an Unveiling Africa publication written by Chizoba Imoka, PhD and the Unveiling Africa Team.

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Executive Summary



In close partnership with Teach for Nigeria and the Lagos State Ministry of Education, together with the support of TY Danjuma Foundation, TEP Centre, Yellow of Lagos, Edugist and Oxbridge Tutorial College, Unveiling Africa hosted the inaugural Re-Rooting in African History (RIAH) Education Summit on June 22-23, 2023 at The Zone, Gbagada and State Universal Education Board Maryland, Lagos.

Themed “African Centered Education: A Pathway to Excellence, Equity and Social Transformation ”, the Re-Rooting in African History Education Summit was an eclectic, intergenerational, intellectually rich, emotionally triggering, provocative and empowering event. It brought diverse stakeholders from across Nigeria, Kenya and Namibia to critically reflect on the state of education in Nigeria from an African-centered perspective and to reimagine the future of the continent through its education sector. Specifically, the event made the case for the incorporation of African centered perspectives, worldviews and histories throughout the Nigerian schooling system.

At the core of the event was the recognition that the fight for a better education system was about the future and dignity of the African child in a global, continental and national context that is pervaded with a deafening silence on Africa’s rich pre-colonial heritage, illustrious and foundational contributions to global civilization. As such, African children continue to graduate from school with an inferiority complex about their race and heritage. They graduate with a limited understanding/knowledge of their immediate communities, limited skills and perspective to harness the power of their history and ancestral knowledge for inclusive, prosperous and peaceful development.

In numerous ways, the event served as a town-crying pan-African multi-stakeholder event that raised consciousness about the contradictions/detrimental effects of colonial education in the lives of African children. It showed concrete examples of the impact of African-centered education on the lives of children. More so, the event equipped 250 teachers and school leaders from across Lagos and Ogun states with practical tools, perspectives and skills required to incorporate African-centered perspectives into their classrooms and schools.

Activities for the summit included opening prayers, welcoming remarks by key figures, cultural performances, and keynote addresses by Prof George Sefa Dei and Engr. Oku & Dr. Utheri Kanayo, and four panel discussions. A notable reflection came from 10-year-old Jordan Harvey Kerama, a Kenyan millionaire who started a successful juice business based on Afro-centric school lessons.

High-ranking civil servants, in both the federal and state levels of Nigerian education, attended, linking the summit's discourse to policy changes. Video contributions from notable figures including Prof. Bolanle Awe (1st Female Professor of Oral History), Mr. Mukthar Bakare (Publisher, Kachifo), Dr. Sheri Fafunwa Ndibe (Professor of Art, Central Connecticut State University), Prof. Hinemoa Elder (Prof. Indigenous Research & New Zealand Child Psychiatrist) and Dr. Hadiza Abdulrahman (Senior Lecturer, School of Education - University of Lincoln) enriched the discussions.

The summit drew 422 in-person attendees and 700 virtual attendees on day one, and 242 attendees on day two.

The insightful and thought-provoking contributions of panelists, keynote speakers, student performances and reflections from members of the audience unleashed a mood of communal disappointment, but also revived interests in upholding our indigenous languages and sparked a collective urgency to interrogate sidelined knowledge/perspectives and take action in the classroom and beyond.



RIAH-Overview of Theme

African-Centered Education: A Pathway to Equity, Excellence and Social Transformation

I am like, I know there is a Mozambique somewhere and you know, I think I put Kenya in an awkward place like where South Africa was supposed to go. It was really bad. I remember having a Malaysia there somehow. So, my knowledge about Africa was almost at a zero level. I was embarrassed and at the same time, I was like wow, so this is how I grew up? (Student, African Leadership Academy in Imoka, 2014)

The quote above, from a 19-year-old South African who shared her experience in an Africa map exercise when she first arrived at African-Leadership Academy in South Africa, also reflects the schooling experience and the sentiments of millions of African youth across the globe. Year in year out, African youth around the globe go through life (K- university education system, work, church) with a complete silence on the importance, power and richness of their pre-colonial heritage/histories and the role African indigenous knowledge systems, African people and African innovations have played in the development of global society. At worst, African children learn about themselves and the African continent from a lens that perpetually glorifies their colonizers and downgrades their humanity, knowledge, language, experiences and perspectives. The implications of this colonial approach to teaching and learning in the classroom are dire. As such, Black children continue to graduate from school with a deprecating sense of self, limited knowledge about their history and their immediate environment.

The RIAH education summit is a response to the historical absence of African-centered perspectives, African History, African indigenous knowledge systems and values in Nigeria's education system. Currently, the education system and resulting curricula is largely divorced from material, cultural and ecological reality of pupils. As a result, Nigerian children graduate from school with a cultural inferiority complex that undermines their sense of identity and self worth, perpetuating a cycle of disconnection from their heritage and history.

Centered around the theme, African-Centered Education: A Pathway to Equity, Excellence and Social Transformation, the 24 speakers collectively shared insights that revealed the contradictions in the education system, the debilitating impact eurocentric approaches is having on students and society, the empowering possibilities of African-centered education and practical insights to guide system change.



Welcome Remarks

**Fmr. Commissioner of Education,
Mrs. Folasade Adefisayo**



Delivering the opening remarks virtually, the Fmr. Honourable Commissioner of Education, Lagos State reflected on her personal experience when she became a new mother and, based on indigenous knowledge, was instructed by her mother-in-law not to eat anything with salt and oil for three days after childbirth. Looking back, she highlighted the valuable and timeless nature of this traditional practice and acknowledged how such practices are becoming extinct because of our belief in the superiority of the western culture. Accordingly, she reminded the education community in Lagos State about the upcoming curriculum review in the state and called for the review to be about the integration of values, languages and indigenous lifestyles into the curriculum. She invited teachers to actively participate in the summit and see it as an opportunity to secure the future of the next generation.



Welcome Remarks

Permanent Secretary of Education,
Mr. Abayomi Abolaji



Mr. Abayomi Abolaji, the permanent secretary of the Lagos State Ministry of Education, addressed the decline of local languages, particularly Yoruba, which is being taught by foreigners in other countries like Canada. He acknowledged the issue within his own community, Ijebu- Ode - Ogun State, Nigeria. where the younger generation struggles to speak their native language. The decline of native languages is attributed to distractions in modern society, like technology, affecting family values and interactions.

Mr. Abolaji stressed the importance of preserving cultural heritage and instilling pride in native languages, values, and ethics among the youth. He believes that positively influencing the younger generation is essential for Africa to become a dominant force in the global economy.

Drawing inspiration from Wole Soyinka, the permanent secretary encouraged the current generation to make a positive impact and prevent further shortcomings. He called for collective efforts to revitalize local languages and cultural values, urging a return to their roots and proactive measures to secure a brighter future for Africa.





Opening Remarks

The Namibian Ambassador to Nigeria, H.E. Humphrey Giesieb,

The Namibian Ambassador to Nigeria, H.E. Humphrey Giesieb, delivered a heartfelt and insightful speech that underscored the deep-rooted historical ties and shared experiences between Namibia and Nigeria. The speech emphasized Nigeria's support during Namibia's struggle for independence. He praised Nigeria's influence, as it represents Africa to the world through its vibrant entertainment industry. The address touched upon various essential aspects, including language, culture, historical struggles, education, gender representation in politics, economic challenges, and a collective commitment to a brighter future for Africa.

A notable example is Namibia's commitment to a better future for Africa by teaching children to sing the African Union Anthem. The importance of inclusion and gender representation in politics was recognized, with Namibia's Zebra policy promoting equal representation of men and women in governance.

The historical impact of colonization on land ownership which has caused economic disparity and led many families into economic challenges and poverty was mentioned together with initiatives aimed at resettling families. In conclusion he highlighted the importance of diplomatic relations, mutual learning, and collaboration in addressing common challenges and building a brighter future for Africa.

Communique Road Map

START



**Keynote Address 1 -
The Afrocentric Philosophy and
African Education.**



**Panel Discussion 1: Exploring Student &
Teacher Experiences of Cultural/Historical
Engagement within the School Context.**



**Panel Discussion 2: Exploring the
Schooling Context for Opportunities.**



**Panel Discussion 3: Harnessing the
Voice of History and Community in
Education Redesign.**



**Panel Discussion 4: Exploring the
Policy Context & Possibilities for
Inclusive Reforms.**



**Keynote Address 2: Unpacking
African-Centered Education
- The Case of Children in Freedom
School, Nakuru, Kenya.**

**Re-Rooting in African History Teacher
Training: Teaching as a Spiritual
Practice (Day 2)**



Explanatory Summary

Dr. Chizoba Imoka - Ubochioma,

“The Education System is designed to advance and uphold the outcomes of the Berlin Conference”



Dr. Chizoba Imoka - Ubochioma - The Education System is designed to advance and uphold the outcomes of the Berlin Conference

Dr. Chizoba Imoka, co-convener of the summit, provided explanatory remarks to ground the event within a relatable articulation of the contemporary manifestation of colonial education in Nigeria. Building on the above, she shared the vision for the event and initiative as a whole. Highlighted points include:

- Even though Nigeria gained independence in 1960, its education system never gained independence from its colonial masters. The current education system remains rooted and aligned to upholding the Eurocentric outcomes of the Berlin conference.
- While Social Studies is taught in school, it is not a replacement for History. Social Studies engages with historical and indigenous knowledge systems as activities in the past, while History is positioned to engage with culture and indigenous knowledge systems in an active manner.
- The colonial educational system has caused Nigerians to have an inferiority complex towards matters relating to their communities and alienated them from their endogenous and indigenous knowledge systems and communities of origin.
- Decolonizing our education system involves creating an education system that serves the needs of the learners, the communities they come from and future generations. It is also about an education system that upholds the identity and perspective of the learner. As such, decolonizing education is very much about culturally relevant education.
- Children need to be taught in a way that honors the knowledge, people and the land they see around themselves. Accordingly, A should not be for Apple but for Amala.

Explanatory Summary



Ms. Folawe Omikunle

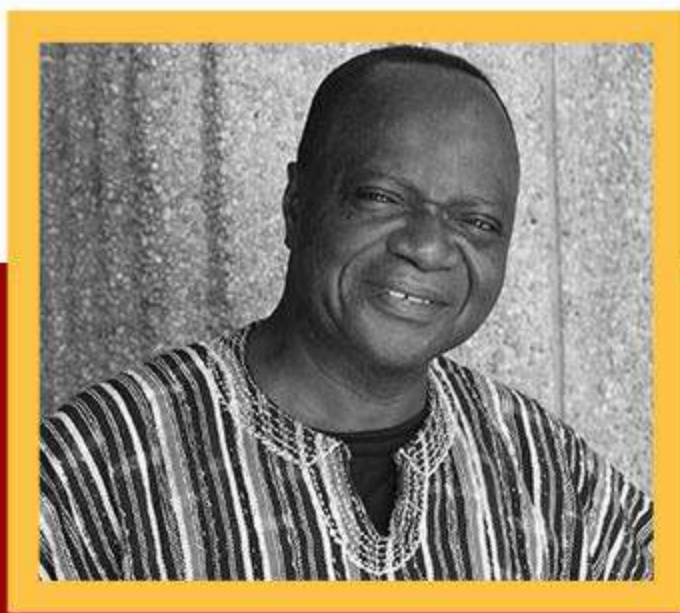
Ms. Folawe, the CEO of Teach For Nigeria and Co-Convener of the Summit, began her speech by extending warm greetings to the audience and introducing herself, emphasizing her roots. She explained that the event served as the inaugural Alumni Summit for Teach For Nigeria.

She emphasized the organization's commitment to addressing educational inequities in Nigeria through a powerful movement of leaders. She believes an Afrocentric approach is essential to empowering children with identity and skills for success. The collaboration with Unveiling Africa is important to Teach for Nigeria as they are constantly seeking practical strategies for educational equity and social transformation.

Ms. Folawe urged the audience to actively participate in the conference, draw inspiration, and commit to taking action beyond the summit. She called for building a powerful movement to transform the lives of every child in Nigeria, envisioning a future where all children can stand tall and succeed with pride in their identity.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS 1

The Afrocentric Philosophy and African Education



Prof. George Sefa Dei

Professor, Social Justice Education,
OISE, University of Toronto

Decolonizing education is not about re-arranging the colonial furniture in education, it is about new beginnings.. It is about transforming society through sidelined yet foundational knowledge and perspectives.. It is about inaugurating connectedness in learners.. Connectedness to the living and the dead...

The Afrocentric Philosophy and African Education

The purpose of Prof. Dei's address was to outline the fundamental principles of Afrocentric education and its implications for education reform in Africa. The core of his remarks revolved around the normalized miseducation in the current education system and the ways in which the system has shifted the student and society away from African indigenous values of community, collaboration and solidarity. His remarks provide clear recommendations and conceptual framing for curricular reform efforts on the continent. These include:

-Intentional disruption of the ongoing miseducation in Africa. There is a need for explicit awareness amongst children about Europe not being the advent of humanity. Before Europe, there was Africa - our children need to know this.

-The need for an African frame of reference - when we think about Africa, its future, its present, what comes to mind? A frame of reference that simultaneously engages Africa's rich indigenous heritage, its current issues and the future desire are critical.

-Theorizing Africa beyond its geographical boundaries: With Africans being globally dispersed from time immemorial, across India, Sri Lanka, Brazil, Columbia, amongst others so also is the history of Africa. In theorizing and discussing Africa, we need to factor in Africa beyond the physical location of the African continent.

-Explicit naming and searching for Africa's interest: In interrogating issues/policies, we need to ask explicitly, is this in the interest of Africa? In advancing such a question, it will be useful to keep Africa's past, present and future in view.





African History is also about our lived experiences, perspectives and dreams.

African history is beyond events and activities: In mobilizing African history, we need to go beyond capturing events and activities to also accounting for lived experiences, perspectives and dreams of African people (ancestors and the living)..

Teaching to Excel: Instead of enforcing discipline on students, decolonizing education calls for teaching discipline.

Upholding the African Ethics of Care: Africans are naturally caring people. The continent's ethic of care must be kept intact within our school system. On the other hand, Africans must also develop a healthy suspicion and critical alertness when engaging with potential foreign powers.

African Excellence & Resilience: In teaching, African children must be shown how excellence and resilience is part of African History and the African DNA. Africa's survival and continued capacity to rise above the damages of the slave trade is an important marker of resilience.



Beginning your **Decolonial Journey** as a School Community : **Basic guide**

School Values:

- Whose cultural values is your school, its processes and programming grounded in and aligned with?
- To what extent are these values connected to and aligned to an African worldview and values system that involves collaboration over competition, communal accountability and progress over individual glory, solidarity, team spirit?
- To what extent are the values aligned to knowledge, priorities and aspirations of the community in which the school is situated, and the schooling population represent?

Historic Consciousness:

- Is the school community aware of the anti-colonial African centered history of the world?
- Are the students aware of the 5 eras of African history (pre-colonial, slave era, colonial, quest for independence, post-colonial and contemporary times), its influence on their lives/life trajectory and contemporary society?
- Do the students know their origin stories – the non-biblical understanding of the history of their hometowns and the connections to the socio-political and economic life of their hometowns? Do they know the topography, abominations, rites of passage and ways of the land of where they come from? Do your students know the meaning, origin and context in which their names were given to them? Do they know their great great grandparents? Where did they come from? What they did for work and the role of their families in the evolution of their town/hometown? Can your students introduce themselves in relation to their unique cultural histories?

Diversity in Representation:

- Look around the pictures on the school walls, the books and the learning materials, the learning support the school leans on and school population (students, teachers, non-teaching staff, leadership), who is represented? Are these pictures reflective of the rich cultural heritage and contributions of Africans to global civilization from pre-colonial times?
- Are elders welcomed in your school as teachers and invaluable knowledge keepers?
- Whose knowledge is being prioritized in the classroom and school activities?
- Is it a euro-centric frame of reference or African-centered frame of reference that is used for teaching?

Language integration:

- Whose language(s) are you privileging in your school? Are students free to speak and share their language with their colleagues? Are students encouraged to bring in their cultural knowledge into the classroom?
- To what extent are indigenous languages integrated into how children are taught and engaged?

Awareness of Social Difference:

- Are students in your school aware of the diverse and intersectional ways in which society is diverse?
- Are they aware of members of the society that may have been rendered invisible, such as the elderly, people living with a disability, economically marginalized, refugees, ethnic minorities?

Awareness & Nurturing of Spiritual Identities:

- Different from religion, does the school acknowledge the spirituality of the community and students? Does the school educate children on African spirituality of divinity, interconnections between the living and the dead?





Multi-Stakeholder Panel 1: Exploring Student & Teacher Experiences of Cultural/Historical Engagement

Moderator: Nene Ibezim, Coach, Teach for Nigeria

The panel provided a teacher and student centered account of the education system especially in relation to how colonial legacies continue to be perpetuated and how cultural identities are engaged in the school system. The panel illuminated the challenges, contradictions and opportunities for change from a student and teacher-centered perspective. The questions explored include:

As a student, how was your cultural identity, personal histories and unique attributes catered to in the school system?

For teachers, in what ways does colonization influence your teaching practice (lesson planning, assessment, student relations, curricula content)?

What are the main differences between an African-centered vs. a mainstream eurocentric school? What are the opportunities for change that you see?

What will an enabling environment for these changes look like?

What will school owners, district heads, policy makers need to do differently to enable decolonial changes in the classroom?

What are some of the key considerations that must be taken into account as Nigerians begin to think of reforming the education system to be more African-centered?

Panelists include: Mr. Opeolu Tella - Dean, Student Affairs, Corona College of Education, Mr. Afeez Saka - Teacher, Teach for Nigeria, Ms. Agnes Onyekwere - Teacher, Teach for Nigeria, Ms. Esther Odekunle - Student, Teach for Nigeria, Ms. Ife Ajayi - Lawyer & Concerned Youth, Abdul Rashid Ayub - Student, Children in Freedom School, Kenya, Ms. Adeola Adefemi - Teacher, Lagos State Ministry of Education

Insights from the Panel:

- Students in rural communities (Badagry, Lagos) continue to be expected to engage in English language even though their immediate language and reality excludes English as a critical mode of communication or engagement.
- Students learn better and prefer to be taught in their indigenous languages but are deprived of this preference and relevant learning materials that are culturally relevant are non-existent.
- Within the private school system, there is a hierarchy in knowledge and amongst subjects teachers. Math and English teachers are deemed as superior to language teachers.
- There is an inferiority complex associated with dealing with cultural subjects.
- Progress and success amongst students is often associated with the ability to do “White things” like speak “Phonetics”
- In African-centered schools, teachers are deeply motivated and their encounter with students is often transformative; students feel spoken to at a deep and spiritual level and in so doing, feel very empowered to pursue excellence because they are made to see how success and excellence is part of their identity. On the other hand, Eurocentric schooling is often associated with a transactional relationship with teachers and the general school environment especially as it relates to cultural identity building. Students have to engage in rote learning to absorb curricula content.
- The education system teachers go through themselves lacks authenticity and is deeply steeped in colonial ways of understanding education and the schooling context. As a result, teachers are limited in the ways they can teach the students.



Panel insights CONT'D

- The education system teachers go through themselves lacks authenticity and is deeply steeped in colonial ways of understanding education and the schooling context. As a result, teachers are limited in the ways they can teach the students.
- Referencing the use of Afro-Fuji music to teach Biology, Mr. Afeez-Saka showed that the infusion of culture in the classroom enables emotional safety and authenticity, promotes self-confidence in their unique cultural self and enables students to see and engage subject content from a multidisciplinary lens.
- When History is taught in schools, it is taught using rote learning approaches. Innovative and creative approaches need to be explored in the teaching of History.

Recommendations

- Infuse culture & history across all subject textbooks: Auditing of current textbooks to include culturally relevant pictures and perspectives.
- Reward Students for Exhibiting Cultural Pride & Competence: Teachers need to be explicitly encouraged and rewarded for using blended teaching approaches that incorporate indigenous languages. Students need to be encouraged and reassured of the importance of their culture and their language in their learning and the role they play in ensuring that their cultural heritage is alive, revitalized and passed on to the next generation.
- Address pay/resource inequities between teachers that teach History/Language vs. other Subjects: Schools have to identify practices and policies that need to be adopted within the school system to uplift and uphold the sacrosanctity of African culture, languages, perspectives and indigenous knowledge systems. In so doing, the social capital associated with teaching and learning indigenous languages and cultures is increased.

Recommendations CONT'D

- **Teaching Outside of the Box:** Teachers need to be trained to see their subjects from a multidisciplinary and practical perspective. Teachers need to be able to establish connections between Biology, History and Music for students.
- **Make History Fun yet Rigorous:** In teaching History as a subject, fun, relatable and engaging approaches need to be adopted. For example, using plays, going on excursions, bringing in elders into the classroom are amongst some of the ideas that could be adopted to teach history. Students should not be taught History using rote teaching methods.





Multi-Stakeholder Panel 2:

Moderator: Mr. Oluwaseun Kayode,
Founder/CEO, Schoolinka

Exploring the Schooling Context for Opportunities

Built on the preceding panel that foregrounded the experiences of teachers and students within the school system and showed the urgent need to decolonize education and promote student learning and outcomes through the infusion of indigenous knowledge, History and relatable perspectives/examples from students' immediate environment. The purpose of this panel was to provide an understanding of the Nigerian schooling context from the perspective of private and public education contexts at various levels of education (teachers college, primary and secondary school). The panelists were invited to share the socio-economic and policy enablers of the required decolonial schooling approaches. In addition, the panelists discussed the opportunities for immediate changes within the schooling context. Some of the questions explored include:

What are the possibilities and challenges associated with pursuing decolonial reforms within the school system?

What can school leaders do to enable decolonial practice in the classroom?

What are the enablers for school leaders' actions? What broader context changes are necessary to support school leaders in their support of teachers?

Panelists include: Mrs. Aramide Kayode, Founder - TalentMine Academy, Dr. Lucy Apakama, Chief Lecturer, Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Dr. Oyetola Olufunke - Tutor General/Permanent Secretary, District 3, Ministry of Education - Lagos State, Mr. Emmanuel Orji, President - Association of Formidable Educators of Nigeria

PANEL 2 REFLECTIONS

- Colonial contradictions abound at the teachers college level. Student-teachers pursuing Igbo as a core subject are taught Igbo in English as opposed to in Igbo. Critical content areas students need to be taught are not available in indigenous languages.
- A transformative approach to teaching indigenous languages is required. Cultural grounding amongst student teachers and the students they will teach will not occur when students are simply taught indigenous languages in a transactionary way that involves learning word translations. Student-teachers need to be taught the cultural way of life and the approach to thinking about the world from an indigenous perspective. For example, learning about communal values, the days of the week, the origins of food, life milestones and its significance are important additions to curricula content.
- The threat to African identity and grounding within African culture is deliberate and sustained by the continuous adoration and incorporation of foreign curricula within the education system. Japanese education system is aligned to Japanese realities and Histories, why shouldn't the Nigerian education system be held by the same threshold?
- Decolonizing the education system requires collective effort. The gains from Prof. Babs Fafunwa's Ife Language experiment was forestalled from system wide scale up due to the push back of citizens.
- Lagos State has introduced the compulsory teaching of History within the school system and created a dedicated day for Yoruba Language to be spoken in school.
- Parents remain the strongest custodians of colonial mentality and the most outspoken advocates of colonial approaches to educating their children. Parents insist that their children must be spoken to in English.
- Prevalent textbooks and assessments used in schools are misaligned to the realities of children.

PANEL 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- Investment in Research & Continuous Development of Learning Materials in Indigenous Languages: To facilitate transformative approaches to teaching at the teachers college level, learning materials, teaching content in indigenous languages are required. This has to be an ongoing effort.
- Recruitment of History Teachers: There is a paucity of qualified and available History Teachers.
- Expanding the Measure of Student Success: To be deemed a successful student, policy changes are required to ensure success includes competence in indigenous languages and historical awareness.
- Involve Parents in the Decolonization Discussion: Using a multiplicity of evidence, parents need to be engaged and enabled to see how their children are at an advantage when they are taught in a culturally grounded way.
- Localized Nationwide Campaign on Decolonization: Decolonization begins with a mindset shift which unleashes critical awakening, critical interrogation of the taken for granted norms/standards/entry points around you and an openness to engage in new discussions that center Africa and African interest.
- Development of Culturally Relevant Texts: Textbooks that are aligned to the reality of students is required.





Multi-Stakeholder Panel 3:

Moderator: Mr. Michael Iyoko,
Coach, Teach for Nigeria

Harnessing the Voice of History & Community in Education Redesign

One of the greatest legacies of the colonial project is the imposition of boundaries between the community and the schools. As a result, the education young people are receiving is neither relevant nor responsive to the needs and aspirations of the community students come from. In this panel, panelists reflected on how colonization affected their communities, the history of previously attempted decolonial reforms and what an alternative and responsive education system looks like.

Panelists include: Mr. Tersoo Akula, Program Officer, TY Danjuma Foundation, Prof. Yusuf Maigida AbdulRahman- Professor/Fellow & Member of Council, Historians of Educational Development in Nigerian Society, Mr. Jake Epelle - Founder, The Albino Foundation (Virtual Attendance), Dr. Ayodele Womiloju - Fmr. President, All Nigeria Confederation of Principals of Secondary Schools, HRM Abimbola Banjoko - The Baale of Ogbogbo Community and Mrs. Rhoda Odigboh, Head of Africa Programs, Kizazi

PANEL REFLECTIONS

- Community leaders remain intellectually connected to the histories of colonial invasion in their communities and the intricate ways in which systems (education, health, etc.) were created to suit the needs and economic vision of the colonial masters.
- Communities are well attuned to the economic needs of their communities, but the education system within the communities remains misaligned to the economic low-hanging fruits of the community.
- The current education system glorifies certificates and exams over skills acquisition.
- The discussion about decolonization in schools is about the inclusion of ALL students regardless of their ethnicity, skin colour, socioeconomic status, geographic location, etc. Albinism remains an area where young people are not properly educated about. Mr. Jake Epelle, a panelist living with Albinism, shared the experience of his son being laughed at in school because of his condition. His son went as far as telling his father (Mr. Jake Epelle) to stop visiting him in school because he did not want to be laughed at.
- Decolonizing education in Nigeria requires interrogating the history of education policy reforms in the country.
- African schooling calendar is misaligned to the economic cycle of many rural communities.
- Decolonizing education also calls for an interrogation of the purpose of education; a purpose of education that transcends economic accumulation and upholds wellbeing, wholeness and balance with the environment are options to consider.



PANEL 3 REFLECTIONS

- The language of innovation and deep learning is currently in English. A shift to indigenous ways of thinking that is aligned to the local reality is necessary.
- Embedded in indigenous knowledge are practices that have helped sustain the community and interpret the nature cycles for communal planning. For example, forests were deemed as evil to prevent trees from being cut, thus preserving the planet and reducing the impact of industry on human life. Rain patterns were studied to predict the weather.
- A new philosophy of education is required; a philosophy of education that upholds African values, ways of seeing and understanding the world.

Recommendations

- **Policy Overhaul in Education:** A decolonized education system requires a philosophy, purpose and outcome of education that is also informed by decolonial reflections and considerations of the society, its history and the current education system. The current philosophy and purpose of education appears to be antithetical to an African-centered vision of education.
- **Mainstreaming a comprehensive and nuanced conception of Inclusion:** In articulating an alternative philosophy of education, developing curricula, training teachers and planning resourcing for the school context, a nuanced understanding of inclusion needs to be unpacked, reflected on and transmitted within the schooling community. This nuanced conception of inclusion includes discussion about albinism amongst other forms of social identities that have been historically marginalized. It also includes young people learning about social identity, privilege and social justice from an intersectional lens.

Recommendations CONT'D

- **Strengthening the Role and Needs of Local Communities in Education Redesign and Delivery:** For education to be relevant and responsive to the needs of communities, the communities must be involved in every step of the development process. Education visioning, planning, and delivery need to be decentralized such that each community feels a strong sense of ownership and representation in the education youth are engaged in.
- **Realigning the African Schooling Calendar:** For education to serve as a potent vehicle for social transformation and economic empowerment, the schooling calendar needs to align with the economic schedule of the respective communities they are situated in.
- **Harnessing Indigenous Knowledge for Curricula Enhancement & Innovation:** A sustained mechanism for mobilizing sidelined Indigenous knowledge, integrating the knowledge into the curricula and upskilling teachers to transmit the knowledge is required.
- **Decentralize Education and Infuse the Needs and Aspirations of Community into Curricula Design:** National and state curriculum/standards need to be further localized and examinations need to assess local knowledge. The local histories, demographic reality, comparative advantages and aspirations of the community need to be central in the design and adaptation of national standards. The education taught within communities needs to align with the needs and realities of the community.
- **Integration of Skills Acquisition and Crafts Making:** A shift from exams and certificates is required. Students need to have the opportunity to acquire practical skills and develop craftsmanship that is aligned to the economic ecosystem that they are located in.



KEYNOTE ADDRESS 2

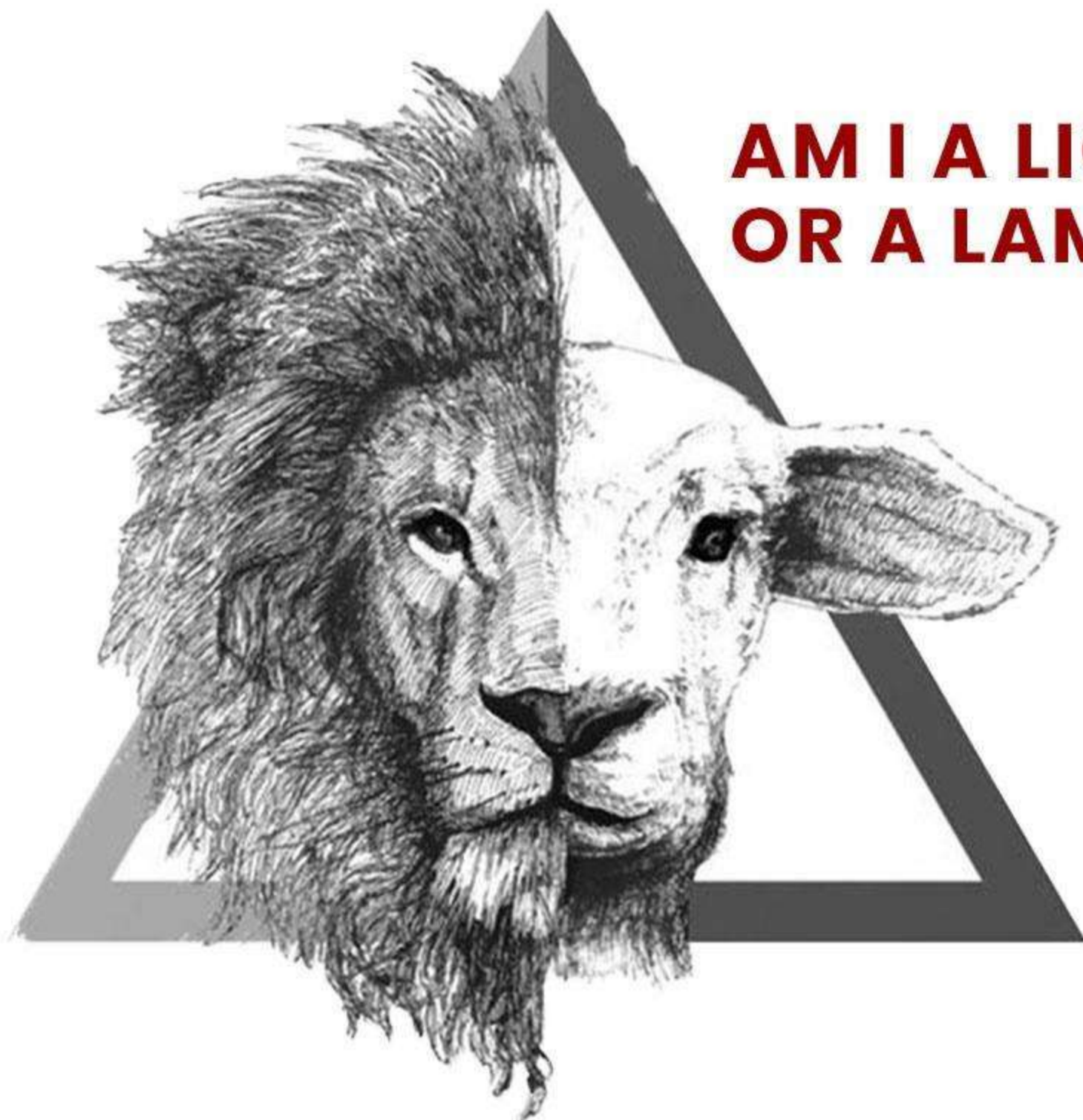
Unpacking African-Centered Education - The Case of Children in Freedom School



Engr. Oku & Dr. Utheri Kanayo, Co-Founders, Children in Freedom School, Nakuru, Kenya.

Previous panels and keynote address provided a comprehensive theoretical overview of African-centered education and outlined the urgency for African-centered reforms. The purpose of the Keynote address was to deepen understanding of African-centered philosophies, illuminate on what it looks like in the classroom and show evidence of improved learning outcomes in students.

AFRICAN IDENTITY CRISIS



**AM I A LION
OR A LAMB ?**

KEYNOTE RELECTIONS

- Amongst the most debilitating impact of colonization on schooling and students is the state of identity crisis students become embroiled in. Students are neither Western enough nor African enough, the looming question for students is Who am I?
- African-centered education provides a strong foundation in cultural identity and historical awareness for learners. It helps individuals navigate the complexities of a globalized world without losing their identity or feeling subordinate to external influences.
- The focus of Children in Freedom School (CIF), Nakuru, Kenya is on instilling a sense of pride in African identity and empowering the students to become masters of their own destinies. It is also about educating children about the significance of their African heritage and the importance of embracing their unique identity.

KEYNOTE RELECTIONS CONT'D

- African-centered education is about comprehensive and culturally grounded education. Supporting students to have a strong sense of identity while also pursuing academic life.
- African-centered education is about equipping Africans with the ability to restore dignity and expressing gratitude to the mother of the world - Africa. Historically, Africa has and continues to feed and build the world but no one gives the continent the accompanying respect or acknowledgement. African-centered education inaugurates historic consciousness and an urgent call to care and action for the continent.
- African-centered education is not only about African language education; it is about equipping African children to solve problems at all levels of society and freely move around to pursue their dreams. Accordingly, African centered education involves teaching youth about technology use/application and technology creation as well as Foreign language education. At Children in Freedom School (CIF), Nakuru, Kenya the children are learning Phyton and Mandarin.
- African-centered education calls for putting African students first in all aspects, including language, dress code, and hairstyles, thereby fostering a strong sense of cultural pride and identity.
- African-centered education calls for collective responsibility for education and invention of learning systems that align with African-centered philosophies.
- African-centered education necessitates self-sufficiency, entrepreneurship and creativity.
- African-centered approaches to education have yielded significant results. The Children in Freedom School (CIF) in Nakuru, Kenya, earned recognition as one of the top 10 schools globally in 2023. Not only did the school excel in national exams, but a student also achieved millionaire status by applying the lessons learned at the school. This successful individual went on to establish the Kerama Juice Company.



Multi-Stakeholder Panel 4:

Exploring the Policy Context & Possibilities for Inclusive Reforms

Moderator: Mrs. Lanre Oniyitan- Founder/CEO, W-Holistic Business Solutions

Teachers, students, school leaders, parents are bound by the policies and directives of policy makers. The educational experience of students can never go beyond the policy directive and vision of the policy makers. To this end, the purpose of this panel was to invite reflections from policy makers that shape the trajectory of the Nigerian education system and student experience. Policy makers shed light on current policies/ actions aimed at promoting African-centered reforms within the system. Questions explored include:

What are the existing policies, processes, pathways that exist to support African-centered ways of knowing and learning?

What are the challenges to realizing the spirit of this approach to teaching and learning?

What are the low-hanging fruits for jumpstarting policy changes? What are critical considerations that must be factored into a theory of change and action?

Panelists include: Prof. Josiah Ajiboye - Registrar, Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria, Prof. Ismail Junaidu - Executive Secretary, NERDC (represented by Dr. Chima Egbujuo, Head of Policy & Programmes, NERDC), Mr. Abayomi Abolaji - Permanent Secretary Ministry of Education, Lagos State

PANEL REFLECTIONS

- There needs to be a balance between Africanizing the Nigerian curriculum and global education standards.
- Teachers have autonomy to teach using methods and resources that are culturally relevant.
- Teachers require continuous professional development to further immerse themselves in African-centered approaches to teaching and the philosophical underpinnings.
- Re-Rooting in African History Education Initiative should ensure the views and reflections from this summit should be surfaced at the National Council on Education.
- Currently, NERDC mandates that the Mathematics and General Science curriculum include 20% and 30% indigenous content.
- At the Federal level, History has been made compulsory for all students. Students are also expected to be taught in the language of their environment and take a language subject. States need to be encouraged to comply with the History education policy.
- Lagos state is reviewing its teaching resources to ensure that texts and learning aids reflect Africa and are African-centered.
- Lagos state has made Yoruba language proficiency a requirement for admission into its model colleges.
- Lagos State ministry of Education is planning a Teacher Training program to enhance teacher capacity for blended teaching approaches.



PANEL 4

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Curriculum Review:** Conduct a comprehensive review of the curriculum to ensure it reflects the peculiarities of the African continent. This should include an increased representation of indigenous content, history, and cultural values in various subjects.
- **Teacher Training:** Implement Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs for teachers to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to incorporate African-centered approaches in their teaching methods. These training sessions should focus on blending indigenous methods with global best practices.
- **Instructional Material Enhancement:** Enhance instructional materials, including textbooks and learning aids, to reflect African values and contexts. This can be achieved by incorporating diagrams, pictures, and examples that are relevant to the African continent.
- **Language Policy Implementation:** Ensure strict adherence to the language policy, which stipulates teaching in the local language of the community and requires students to take at least one indigenous language subject. States should be encouraged to implement this policy effectively.
- **Advocacy and Sensitization:** Conduct massive advocacy and sensitization campaigns among teachers, school administrators, parents, and communities to create awareness and understanding of the importance of Africanizing the curriculum. This will garner support and buy-in from stakeholders.
- **State-Level Implementation:** States should take the responsibility of domesticating policies and guidelines related to Africanization and decolonization of education. There should be close monitoring and evaluation to ensure policies are effectively implemented at the school level.
- **Public-Private Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration between public and private educational institutions to promote African-centered education. Private schools should also be encouraged to integrate indigenous content into their curriculum.
Support from Sponsors: Seek funding and support from sponsors and organizations to implement teacher training programs and other initiatives

PANEL 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Public-Private Collaboration:** Encourage collaboration between public and private educational institutions to promote African-centered education. Private schools should also be encouraged to integrate indigenous content into their curriculum.
- **Support from Sponsors:** Seek funding and support from sponsors and organizations to implement teacher training programs and other initiatives aimed at Africanizing the education system. This could involve partnerships with international organizations, government agencies, and private corporations.
- **Inclusion of School-Based Management Committees:** Involve School-Based Management Committees in the decision-making process to ensure their buy-in and active participation in implementing the African-centered perspective of learning.





RIAH

RE-ROOTING IN
AFRICAN HISTORY

TEACHERS
TRAINING

Teaching as a
Spiritual Practice





To facilitate the uptake of the lessons and insights from Day 1 of the RIAH Education Summit, a training for School Leaders & Teachers was held on June 23, 2023. Thematically, the training explored Teaching as a Spiritual Practice by engaging and exposing teachers and students to historical truths and facts about Africa and her contributions to global civilization across all fields. The negation of these histories, the colonial bias of mainstream education and the implication this has had and continues to have on the psyche of African children was used to reinforce the spiritual purpose/component of teaching.

To practicalize the insights, teachers and fellows of Teach for Nigeria were divided into subject specializations and tasked to develop a lesson plan based on insights gained. This session was facilitated by the Co-Founders of Children in Freedom School, Engr. Oku & Dr. Utheri Kanayo. To reinforce the importance of the workshop, the Chairman of Lagos State Universal Education Board - Mr. Alwaiye Wahab-King attended the event along side five permanent Secretaries from various education districts in Lagos state. He gave opening remarks and led the teachers in Lagos State's Education Anthem.



Simultaneously, students from Lagos State public schools, Corona Secondary School and Children in Freedom School, Kenya were divided into mixed groups and asked to apply Afrocentric models into developing solutions for the eradication of corruption in Africa using Afrocentric models. Mr. Gichuki Maina (teacher from CIFS) facilitated this session.

At the end of the student session, student groups presented their solutions. The teachers also presented their group projects, followed by feedback and a final discussion on fostering a problem-solving mindset within the school community. The day concluded with a discussion on the way forward, reuniting students with their teachers and school leaders, and a vote of thanks and closing prayer facilitated by one of the summit's organizers. 241 teachers and school leaders were in attendance.





Conclusion

Put together, the four panel discussions and two keynote addresses established the urgency for Nigeria's education system to be critically interrogated from a student and African-centered perspective. Importantly, the discussions from the first day of the summit showed the negative impact of colonial teaching on students, and provided a sneak peek into the transformative potential for students when culturally relevant perspectives are included in teaching. The long term dependence on European education systems and the seeming lack of technical expertise around practicalizing African centered perspectives was acknowledged as a potential stumbling block. However, the experience of the co-founders of Children in Freedom school helped to dispel fears around the practicality of African-centered perspectives in teaching. From a policy perspective, the panelists highlighted the low-hanging fruits for immediate changes to occur, these include the federal mandate for History education to be taught and teacher autonomy to use blended teaching approaches.

In terms of solutions, it was acknowledged that an ecosystem overhaul is required and it will require a sustained and consistent push to transformation. The envisioned ecosystem changes begins with creating a new philosophy, vision and purpose of education that is African-centered, problem-solving focused and globally oriented. This new vision and purpose of education will permeate every arm and stakeholders of the education system, including, curriculum developers, teachers, teacher education institutes, publishers, quality assurance personnel amongst others.



Recommendations by Stakeholders:

Decolonizing Africa's education system requires coordinated collective action amongst all education stakeholders including students. The required change will happen over a period of time. Some of the recommendations can be effected in the short-term while the outcomes of other proposed recommendations will be felt in the medium and long term.

Students at all levels of education must:

1. Continue to exercise their agency as agents of and conduits for a brighter future for Africa and the world. As such, they must continue to speak up about their schooling experiences and demand for system changes. They must ask their parents, grand-parents and community leaders questions about their identity, history and their personal role in nation and continental building.
2. Request for cultural content and history to be infused into teaching and learning in school. They must see themselves as the vehicle through which the African continent and world at large would be transformed into a more just, inclusive, and prosperous place for all.
3. Use extracurricular opportunities to mobilize education stakeholders and fellow students to share experiences of cultural engagement in schooling and dreams for a better education system.



Teachers should leverage their autonomy and exercise agency by:

1. Creating a classroom where principles of decolonization and Africa through its values, people (living and dead), history and contributions to the world are upheld, celebrated, and honored. This can be achieved through pictures on the wall, class norms, class routines, class arrangement and supporting learning materials.
2. Creating lesson plans that start and end with the brilliance of Africa & Africans. This can be achieved by beginning and ending every class with a story, anecdote, proverb, newspaper clipping, song, quote, showcase of an African pacesetter or the African origin of the discipline/subject that will be taught.
3. Infusing an African-centered perspective and anti-colonial understanding of global history in teaching.
4. Adopting creative teaching strategies that involves using examples from the learner's immediate environment and invites learners to draw from local/family histories and local environment for assignments.
5. Exploring the use of problem-based methods and integrative teaching approaches that involves the fusion of unlikely subjects – music, entrepreneurship, biology, political science and Mathematics.
6. Continuing to advocate for increased engagement at all levels of education reform.
7. Leveraging technology to join professional networks and share resources for innovative decolonial teaching.



School Owners/Principals/District Heads should use their Power to:

1. Conduct an African-centered audit of school processes/ practices and culture. Based on the results, develop an action plan for decolonizing the school and infusing African-centered perspectives across schooling.
2. Make African-centered History education, cultural appreciation, and critical inclusion of all people despite differences a school wide, year-long activity. This could be achieved by using school assembly to teach History, showcase systemic exclusion of certain disadvantaged groups (people with disability, people in lower socio-economic classes) and promote language appreciation by encouraging assemblies to be conducted in indigenous languages. The school environment could also be beautified with photos of African leaders, African arts and craft or historical quotes/contributions.
3. Create an environment that normalizes the appreciation, pride and love for all things Africa EVERYDAY and not just on Independence Day or cultural day. This could be achieved through mandated dressing, incorporation of African values in school management, hair styles, student leadership, school projects, amongst others.
4. Introduce African/Nigerian Studies and deliver it both as an extracurricular and curricular activity.
5. Develop a campaign/program that engages parents on the importance and benefits of African-centered perspectives in schooling. In addition, involve parents in education delivery.



6. Reinforce connections between community and school by creating a position of influence for African-centered community leaders and elders within the school system.
7. Reinforce the transformative function of education by supporting teachers in creating assignments/projects that attempt to solve community problems.
8. Organize African-centered professional development programs to enhance the capacity of teachers/school leaders.
9. Provide supporting grants and resources (technology, permission, etc) for teachers to teach History and other subjects in an experiential and fun way.
10. Through various initiatives, increase the status of teachers in general and eliminate pay discrimination between teachers that teach culture-based subjects and science subjects.

Federal Policy Makers need to:

1. Mobilize the nation across its diversities to develop a new dream and purpose of Nigeria and Africa that the education system will now be designed to respond to.
2. Develop a new philosophy and policy on education that is problem-based, aligned to the different economic sectors on the continent and prioritizes African-centered approaches and indigenous knowledge systems at all levels.
3. Develop new assessment methodologies and education implementation processes that are aligned to decolonial approaches to teaching and learning outcomes. For example, student exams should assess knowledge of local realities, histories and concerns.
4. Expand the conception of student success to include success in History, Languages and Community Service.
5. Overhaul and decolonize the curriculum at the Teachers College level. Pre-service teachers need to be immersed in principles of decolonial African-centered perspectives and its implication for teaching and learning.

6. Support the implementation of the language policy by developing teaching and learning materials in indigenous languages and teacher training.
7. Audit the current textbooks for cultural relevance and translate textbooks in indigenous languages.
8. Through various initiatives, increase the status of teachers in general and eliminate pay discrimination between teachers that teach culture-based subjects and science subjects.
9. Address to the teacher shortage especially in History by actively recruiting more teachers and paying them well.



State Governments need to:

1. Mobilize resources to implement and enforce the current language policy that stipulates all children must be taught in the language of their local environment from p1-p4.
2. Actively implement the decentralization of education management and administration.
3. Actively reward competence in African history and languages by making it a requirement in job applications or providing extra advantage for cultural competence.
4. Work collaboratively with civil society and the private sector to inaugurate a prize for History and cultural competence.
5. Provide resourcing to schools and teachers to teach history in a fun, rigorous and creative way.
6. Work collaboratively with researchers to tease out local history and knowledge systems and their implications for subjects' students learn.

7. Commission a research team to develop a repository of locally relevant materials and techniques for teaching.
8. Celebrate and reward schools/districts that are actively promoting culture and creatively using indigenous knowledge systems for community problem solving.

Education Funders should:

1. Work collaboratively with local education actors to identify a decolonization roadmap for K-12 and tailor funding to support its implementation.
2. Support the democratization of Early Childhood Education for all learners. The Foundation for solid higher learning is laid at the early childhood education phase yet, not all Africans have equitable access to ECE.
3. Support research aimed at illuminating the African schooling context from an African-centered perspective.



Parents should:

1. Mobilize themselves to learn about the benefits of African-centered education.
2. Work collaboratively with schools to teach children about history, cultural values and reinforce school projects.



Concerned Public/Practitioners /Researchers:

1. Work collaboratively with education stakeholders to debunk misconceptions about African-centered education and promote its benefit to all.
2. Work collaboratively with school teachers and leaders to identify their needs and potential roles that could be played.
3. Identify research priorities that will illuminate the barriers to the adoption of decolonial teaching approaches and the benefits for adoption.



About Unveiling Africa

Established in 2007 in Canada as a platform for African youth in diaspora to contribute to nation building from a distance, Unveiling Africa has evolved into becoming a renowned youth leadership organization that provides a platform for Nigerian teenagers to begin their social leadership journey and imbibe a passion for social change in Africa. Through Unveiling Africa's flagship program - Transformers Club, Unveiling Africa has trained over 5000 teenagers in youth leadership across public and private schools in Nigeria. As teenagers, UVA youths stand out as leaders and pacesetters wherever they are. Wherever you find them, they are the selfless self-starters, the incurable optimists, the community mobilizers, the tireless problem-solvers and the political conscious ones. They are the youth that give up lunch and save funds to buy a bus for less privileged youth within their communities. They are the youth that engage with community leaders to identify a sanitation problem and decide to raise funds to build the first standardized toilet in the market square. As a collective, Unveiling Africa teenagers have launched 30+ social impact projects and continue to lead in their respective school/professional communities. Unveiling Africa Teenagers are alumni of renowned institutions such as African Leadership Academy, United World College, African Leadership University amongst others.

Leveraging on this history, Unveiling Africa has deepened its scope to address the absence of African-centered and social justice perspectives in global education and social systems. We believe that Africa's education system is the most potent and strategic vehicle to transformatively engage African youth and position them for a life of transformative social leadership. Accordingly, we have worked with Lagos State Ministry of Education to provide advice on the infusion of History in its curriculum and program delivery. We have designed curricula



We have partnered with 64 world leading professors and practitioners from Nigeria, Canada, United Kingdom & USA to train over 300 teachers and youth from around the world in African-centered perspectives and Histories

Through a combination of research, capacity building, strategic program design and convening initiatives, Unveiling Africa is taking a center stage in equipping a new generation of social leaders (teachers, civic actors and teenagers) with an African-centered perspective while facilitating a shift towards African-centered education reforms.

OUR VISION

A prosperous and independent Africa that is driven by a generation of youths who are culturally grounded, critical thinkers, problem solvers, and passionate about Africa's development.

OUR MISSION

To educate & engage african youth for inclusive & equitable social change in Africa.

Our Programs

- **Teacher Training**
- **African History Courses**
- **Education Consulting**
- **Re-Rooting In African History (RIAH) Education Summit**
- **History and Leadership Club for Teenagers**
- **Nzuko Afrocentric Saturday School**
- **Life Skills Training & Internship Placement**

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TEACHFORNIGERIA

About Teach For Nigeria

Teach for Nigeria is focused on developing a movement of leaders across the nation who are committed to putting an end to educational inequity. With the vision: One day, every Nigerian child will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education, she recruits Nigeria's brightest and most outstanding future leaders from varied disciplines to teach in Nigeria's underserved schools in low-income communities through a highly selective, two-year Fellowship.

The Teach For Nigeria Fellowship is a transformational leadership program that equips Fellows with transferable leadership skills to effect change beyond the classrooms in the communities we serve. After the Fellowship, these individuals (known as "alumni") go on to become educators, public officials, policymakers, advocates and social entrepreneurs building on their classroom teaching experience to drive long-term systemic changes in the educational sector in Nigeria.





RIAH

RE-ROOTING IN
AFRICAN HISTORY

EDUCATION SUMMIT

AGENDA

Thur. June 22, 2023

Registration / Accreditation of Participants	Starts 7:30AM
9:00am- 9:10am	Welcome/House Keeping
Opening Remarks	9:10am – 9:25am
9:25am – 9:35am	Why are we here?
Artistic Rendition	9:35am - 9:45am
9:45am -10:40am	Multi-stakeholder Panel 1
Tea Break (video showcase)	10.40am - 11.00am
11:00am - 11:30 am	Keynote Address 1
Multi-Stakeholder Panel: Schooling context and opportunities	11:30am - 12:10pm
12.15pm - 1.05pm	Harnessing the Voice of History & Community in Education Redesign
Lunch time	1.05pm -1.50pm
1:55pm - 2.25pm	Keynote Address 2
Panel Discussion: Learning from other Jurisdictions	2:30pm - 3:00 pm
3:00pm – 3.40pm	Panel Discussion: Exploring the Policy Context & Possibilities for Inclusive Reforms
Thought Spaces	3.40pm – 4.10pm
4:10pm - 4.20pm	Closing Remarks



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About Transformers Club

Founded in 2012 as the flagship initiative of Unveiling Africa, transformers club is a youth leadership club that nurtures young people to be well-rounded leaders who are globally competitive, culturally grounded, and agents of social change.