

BACKGROUND

Girls have the right to education, skill acquisition and self-actualization. Girl-child education becomes an imperative for the attainment of National development.

Research demonstrates clearly that a strong focus on education is able to transform society in the long term. Education for females, within the family unit is necessary for the development of the whole, and by extension the community.

The human capital of a nation is judged by the potential of its people being healthier, more educated, empowered and productive citizens. This implies that investing in educating half of the population must become a priority for us. Our current realities are:

- Over 70.8% of women in the Northwest are unable to read and write compared to 9.7% in the Southeast zone.
- More than 2/3 of 15-19-year-old girls in the north are unable to read a sentence compared to less than 10% in the South.
- In the eight northern states, over 80% of women are unable to read and write compared with 54% of men. In Jigawa state, 94% of women and 42% of men are illiterate.
- Only 4% of females' complete secondary school in northern Nigeria.
- The children of educated mothers are 50% more likely to survive past the age of 5 years and educated mothers are more likely to send their own children to school.
- Almost 9 in 10 women with higher education and 2/3 of women with secondary education give birth in a health facility; but only 1 in 10 uneducated women do so.
- 80% of children whose mothers are educated are well nourished, compared to less than 50% of children whose mothers are uneducated.

About 42.1 million Nigerians are eligible for primary school, but only 23.3 million are in school. While 33.9 million adolescents are eligible for secondary school, only 5.4 million are in school.

Source: [Education for the Girl Child in Northern Nigeria](#)

Following the assertions above and the current challenges facing girl child education in northern Nigeria, Empowering Women for Excellence Initiative (EWEI) launched the Educational Subsidy Programme (ESP) in 2010 to support girl child education. The ESP aims to subsidise the cost of books, uniforms and exam fees for girls.

The ESP also provides opportunities for beneficiaries to receive additional skills in leadership and social entrepreneurship to augment their education; providing capacity building in information technology, health, business and related fields. These seminars are called Empowerment Seminars and are held quarterly. The girls also receive mentoring from EWEI staff and Mentors.

In 2010, our first batch of beneficiaries: 7 students from 4 public schools were signed unto the ESP and as at 2013, 5 of those girls remained in the programme. In 2014, a new set of beneficiaries were signed unto the ESP.

BENEFICIARIES BATCH TWO



Augustina Isuwa was born into the family of Mr. and Mrs. Isuwa and the third born of the family.

She was a student of Government Girls Secondary School Independence Way Kaduna. She loves reading educational books and her favourite subjects are Mathematics, English and Science. While in school she was a member of science club.

Her outstanding performance in school resulted in her selection as an ESP beneficiary at age 14. Augustina is outspoken, not shy always ready to learn.

She aspires to become a nurse in future and be of help to the less privileged in the society. Augustina says of her time as a beneficiary, **“Special thanks to EWEI for giving me the opportunity as an ESP beneficiary, I must say that the organisation has been a great support to me completing my secondary education.”**

Mary Ayandokun is an indigene of Kwara State born to the family of Mr. and Mrs. Ayandokun and was a student of Government Girls Secondary School Independence Way Kaduna. While in school, she was the Head Girl and overall the best graduating student. Her excellent academic performance in school led to her selection as an ESP beneficiary and she was specially recommended by her principal. At 15, she was excelling in all subjects. Mary favorite subjects are Mathematics, Science and English language. In her words, **“EWEI paid my fees in school and I promise to be a good student and dedicate my time to my studies.”**





Born on the 14 July 1998 into the family of Mr. and Mrs. David, **Jessica David** is an indigene of Kaduna State and Bajju by tribe. She loves reading, dancing and singing. She was a student of Government Girls Secondary School Television, Kaduna. While in school, she was a science student and aspires to study Biochemistry to be able to produce drugs to help the less privileged in the society.

She did excellently in our assessment test and came highly recommended as a model student and thereafter selected as a beneficiary. Jessica believes education is the key to great success and for any one to succeed they must be educated.

Jessica says, **"I want to appreciate EWEI for giving me the opportunity to see that I become what I wish to in future. I will study hard to fulfil my future ambition to help other girls like me."**

Abigail Jagaba is 15 years old and an indigene of Kagoro from Kaduna State, born into the family of Jagaba Turaki.

Abigail was a student of Government Girls Secondary School Doka and she aspires to become a medical doctor in future.

Her favourite subjects are Mathematics, English, Chemistry and Biology. Her Principal recommended for the Educational Subsidy Programme because of her performance in school. She proved it by excelling in the assessment test. Today, she has proved to be a worthy beneficiary. Abigail's hobbies are singing and reading because they make her happy. In her words, **"I want to be great to help the girls like me achieve their potential because if you train a girl you train a Nation."**





Every year 1 January is a sad day for the Achakwus because the death of the breadwinner and father of 15-year-old **Melody Joseph**. Her hope of becoming a doctor looked like a difficult task to achieve. Melody is the fourth of seven siblings; she is from Benue State and was a student of Government Girls Secondary School Television Kaduna. Things became difficult for her mother after her father's death and it seemed like Melody's dream of completing her secondary school education was never

going to materialize. That is, until EWEI visited her school to select beneficiaries to be a part of the Educational Subsidy Programme and due to her excellent performance in the assessment test and academic performance, she was selected.

Melody says the day she was informed that she was selected, it that was the happiest day of her life and her words were, **"Do not let anyone make you feel inferior. Remember that God loves you and he is there to help you in any situation."** Melody's favorite quote is **"Dream it ; believe it and you can become it. If you have light, let others light their candles."**

A Gwari native from Niger State, 16-year-old **Gloria Mathias** was born into the family of Mr. and Mrs. Gunduma Mathias, known for their farming skills. In the quest to better the education of their daughter her parents allowed Mr. and Mrs. Basil Ezeoke to be her guardians and help her gain quality education in Kaduna. While in school, Gloria was the Head Girl and held various leadership positions in clubs and societies. Gloria loves to read novels, historical books, and journals. What makes her happy is whenever she sings.



Because of her family background and academic performance, she was recommended for the ESP. She then took the assessment test and excelled. Gloria wants to be a nurse in future.



Dorathy Ukpai is a beneficiary of ESP and a final year student of Government Girls Secondary School Television. She was born in Kaduna into the family of Mr. and Mrs. Ukpai on 24 September 2000 and hails from Enugu State. Dorathy's journey to become a beneficiary started when her class teacher recommended her to EWEI because of her outstanding academic performance.

She proved it by scaling through the selection process and was selected to be a beneficiary of the ESP to help her achieve

her dream of becoming a medical doctor in the future. Dorathy believes that determination is the key to success.

Grace A. Okunola was the Head Girl while in her junior secondary school when she became a beneficiary of the ESP. Today she is a final year student in Government Girls Secondary School Independence Way, Kaduna. 17 years old, Grace was born into the family of Mr. and Mrs. A. Okunola. She is an official of the Fellowship of Christian Students (FCS), Jet club and a member of the Generations For Peace club.

Grace favourite subjects are Mathematics, English and Science.



Due to her academic performance and unique qualities, she has represented her school in competitions including a debate competition. Grace has passion to sing and loves to dance. Her favorite quote is, **"If education is expensive please try ignorance."**