



# **SAVE LOMILEJU! PROJECT BY**

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#### **BACKGROUND**

A report by the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) titled: “An overview of Out-of-School Children Syndrome in Nigeria”, revealed that ‘13.2 million children are out of school in Nigeria, representing between 52.5% and 60% (or more than half) of all the out-of-school children worldwide’. The report, which is considered by education experts as the most current data on the state of basic education in Nigeria was released on January 11, 2017 in Yankari, Bauchi State, at a meeting between UBEC management and Heads of the 37 States’ Universal Basic Education Commissions (SUBEBs).

UBEC’s latest statistic appeared to substantiate a 2015 report by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) that Nigeria was one of the four countries with a swelling population of out-of-school children. At the time, UNESCO put Nigeria’s out-of-school population at 10.5 million.

Okia Lomileju is one of the villages under Epe ward, Ondo East Local Government, Ondo State, South Western part of Nigeria. Lomileju has a population of over 700 people, of whom 30% constitute children.

#### **THE INTERVENTION**

Just as Malala Yousafzai once said, “In some parts of the world, students are going to school every day. It’s their normal life. But in other parts of the world, we are starving for education...

it's like a precious gift. It's like a diamond...” such is the case in Okia Lomileju. It has only one primary school named L.A. (Local Government Authority) Primary School, Okia, Lomileju, with dilapidated buildings and structures. The classrooms and school offices have no windows and doors. The roof of the school is old and leaking which makes teaching stop whenever it rains and pupils are sent back home for safety. The environment is not conducive for learning. Most parents are discouraged to send their children to school due to the state of the school. The attendance of pupils at school gradually dropped from about 207 to 86 and currently to 44 and with time, if the school is left in that state, children in Lomileju village will no longer have access to education. They would neither be able to compete in nor compliment the world around them.

Therefore, in contributing my quota to ensuring the achievement of the 4th goal of the SDGs – to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all - and to reduce the number of out-of-school children, the Save Lomileju! Project was embarked upon.

A block of classrooms and office of the L.A. (Local Authority) Primary School, Okia Lomileju was renovated, making it conducive and safe for learning; Free Medical checkup and distribution of drugs to members of the community; and I had heart to heart discussions with the pupils on the value and importance of education and good health.

## **STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT**

A survey was carried out within the community and we held stakeholders meetings which involved the traditional leader of the community, community elders, the school head teacher, other teachers in the school, parents and guardians of the students and the school children.

## **THE PROJECT**

The project was kicked off on the 31st of October, 2016, completed and handed over the school to the community on the 24th of April, 2017. The Save Lomileju! Project lasted for about six months with different activities at different stages of the project which included: a needs assessment; stakeholders meetings; crowdfunding campaigns; school renovation - plastering of the school classroom and office walls, provision of entrance doors and windows, repairing of the

school's old leaking roof, painting of the building, branding of the school wall which serves as a sign post for the school.

Free medical checkup and distribution of drugs was done for members of the community.

Heart to heart discussions on the importance of education, health and wellbeing were held with the children and members of the community.

## **THE IMPACT**

The conducive and safe environment encouraged other parents to release their children and wards back to school, thereby reducing the number of out-of-school children and the level of illiteracy in the village.

The Save Lomileju project helped to improve the chances of children in Lomileju to compete with the surrounding world.

Also, the health and nutritional wellbeing of members of the community improved.

## **FINANCE**

The project was run on funds raised from an online crowd fundraising campaign ([donate-ng.com/project/259](https://donate-ng.com/project/259)), donations from Community Leaders, Political Leaders, Organizations, Well-meaning Individuals, friends and family. Most of them also supported the project in kind.

A breakdown of which is highlighted as follows (in Nigerian Naira):

21 bags of cement	N52, 100
Sharp Sand - 3 tippers @ N11, 000	N33, 000
3 big buckets of paint @ N4, 500	N13, 500
Manpower	N35, 000
Doors and Windows	N125, 300
Branding (Sign Post)	N20, 500
Medical outreach	N26, 400
Transportation	N11, 490
Communication	N5, 500
Miscellaneous	N3, 400
<b>Total</b>	<b>N326, 190</b>

## **CONCLUSION**

The Save Lomileju! project has been able to touch the lives of over 700 members of Lomileju community, most especially the children who were out of school. The children were inspired to put their hearts to education, the Out-of-School children were encouraged to go back to their classrooms, the health and nutritional wellbeing of members of the community improved, both old and young have smiles on their faces again, and the children were given hope of a bright future.

I stayed back in Ondo state upon completion of my national youth service just to complete the Save Lomileju! Project because the education and the future of the children in Lomileju community are of utmost importance to me.

The most valuable achievement all through my service year is the fact that I could put smiles on the faces of children in Lomileju village and education in their hearts again.

Education is a fundamental human right and is indispensable for the achievement of sustainable development. We are only able to empower girls and boys, combat climate change, fight inequality, end extreme poverty, and achieve the other sustainable development goals, if all stakeholders, commit themselves to advancing the quality education goal and support governments in delivering on their promise of quality education for all.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

I therefore recommend that the private sector and the government should look into providing schools and access to quality education for children in rural areas using Lomileju community and the Save Lomileju Project as case study.

## **I SUPPORT QUALITY EDUCATION**

## **I SUPPORT GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**



## PICTURE GALLERY



**The school building before renovation**



**Stakeholders Involvement**



**Project Inspection by NYSC Officer –  
Asst. LGI Ondo East Local Government**

**Save Lomileju! - Medical Outreach**





**Save Lomileju! - Medical Outreach**



**Men at work**



**The new face of Local Authority (L.A.) Primary School, Okia Lomileju  
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