

INVESTIGATION

By Gambo S. Nababa

How infrastructural decay affects basic education in rural Kano

Basic infrastructure at the basic level of education in some villages and rural areas in Kano State are in a state of total decay, Daily Trust on Sunday reports.

Investigation by our reporter who went to some schools in the three senatorial districts of the state indicate that infrastructure such as classrooms, laboratories, workshops, sporting facilities, equipment and libraries are not only non-existent, but even the few on ground are in a state of rot.

Gawo Primary School in Gezawa Local Government Area has an extensive land mass capable of accommodating even a boarding secondary school. However, Primaries 1 and 2 pupils and children of Early Education and Child Care (EECC) class sit under trees. The school has only four blocks of classrooms out of which two have collapsed, one is dilapidated and the last barely manageable.

The dilapidated block of two classrooms accommodates Primaries 3 to 6 pupils. Primaries 3 and 4 pupils are merged in the first class while Primaries 5 and 6 pupils are sit in the other. All the classes have no furniture.

The manageable block in the school was given to students of a junior secondary school (JSS) that was created in the ward last year. The primary school had no option than to provide somewhere for the JSS students. Therefore, the JSS was given the block of two classrooms which also has no furniture.

At the moment, first year students of the secondary school sit on the floor while second year students are lucky to have few tables and chairs fabricated locally from a big tree which stood in the school compound.

The Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) of the school paid for the fabrication and they are building a toilet for the school as there is none right now. The principal, headmaster and their staff jointly use a small office accommodation.

A source in the school told our reporter that there were more than 200 pupils in the EECC and primary that received lessons under trees. Now that the harmattan has begun, they don't come to school. According to the source, stable learning activities would no longer be possible as even after the harmattan, rains frequently interrupted classes.

Further investigation revealed that the PTA and the School Based Management Committee (SBMC) provide some of the books needed for effective teaching, but there are no sporting facilities.

Similarly, the Village Head of Gawo, Alhaji Umar Yusuf, said they complained severally about the condition of the school and they were hopeful that government would address the situation soon.

He said, "We have started talking to indigenes of this ward that are well to do to come and



Primary 2 pupils in their class at Namaje Primary School, Karaye LGA

PHOTOS: Gambo S. Nababa



Staffroom and headmaster's office at Namaje Primary School, Karaye Local Government area



Primary 3 and 4 pupils in their demarcated classes at Namaje Primary School, Karaye LGA

assist us. The government should also come forward to address the terrible condition of the school even if what they can do does not meet our expectations."

Muhammad Lawan, a father who has about 10 children in the school, said the pupils were sometimes not keen about coming to the school as they grumbled over sitting in the open.

On his part, Alhaji Abdu Ali, one of the PTA members of the school, said the school had completely collapsed and that they had done their best to call the attention of government.

He said, "We met with members representing this local government in the House of Representatives

and the Kano State House of Assembly, Musa Ado and Isyaku Ali Danja, respectively, to either renovate the school or assist us to talk to the relevant authorities, but they have not."

At another school, Gandu Model Primary School, Ketawa Ward, in the same Gezawa Local Government Area, has over 800 pupils.

The school has three blocks of two classrooms which are in bad condition. Whenever it rains or when it is sunny, no learning activity takes place. There are no windows in the classes, the roofing is scattered and both teachers and pupils do not have furniture.

One of the teachers in the

school said they had liaised with the school's PTA and provided sitting mats for the pupils through joining Bagco bags, but that the mats had been messed up due to long usage, but that they were planning to sew new ones.

The teacher said the PTA also provided drugs, chalk and other necessary teaching materials.

"We have written a number of letters to the local education authority but the only answer we are getting is that we should exercise patience as government would collate end of the year report from schools. Even the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) also intermittently sends us questionnaires asking about

the condition of the school but we have not seen anything from them," he lamented.

Daily Trust on Sunday observed that the school has good fencing and a hand pump borehole with clean water running.

The situation in some schools our reporter visited in Karaye Local Government Area, in the southern part of the state, is not different. For example, Namaje Primary School is not more than three kilometres away from the local government headquarters but the condition of the school is pitiable.

The school has about 450 pupils

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