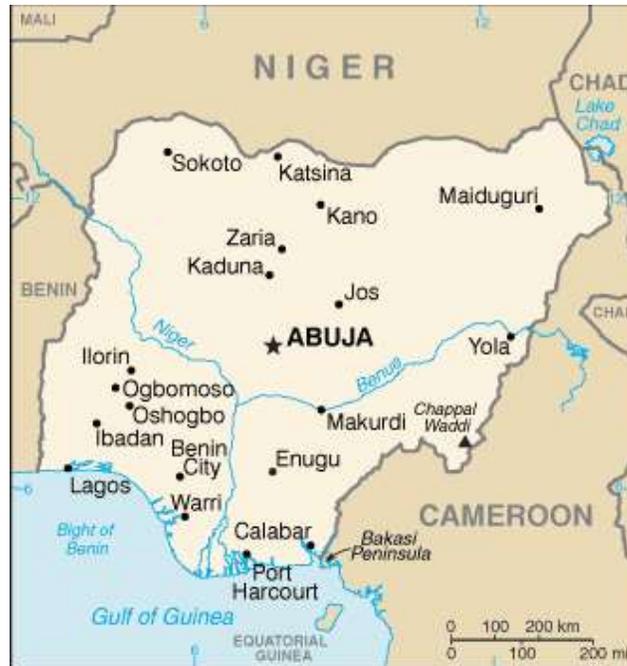




International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Returning to Nigeria

Country Information Sheet



Source: CIA World Fact book, 2014, www.cia.gov/library/publications/resources/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html.

Prepared by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) Mission in Malta, with contributions from IOM Nigeria, within the framework of the project 'Enhanced Cooperation between Malta and Migrants' Countries of Origin. Lessons Learned and Sharing of Experience with Other European Countries' (RF 2013-05), funded by the European Return Fund under Annual Programme 2013.



**General Programme Solidarity & Management of Migration Flows
2007-2013**

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Sustainable Management of Migration Flows

Political situation¹

Following greater autonomy from the British influence and control through a series of constitutions after World War II, Nigeria – Africa’s most populous country – became independent in 1960. The transition from military rule to civilian government was realized by the adoption of a new constitution in 1999. Nigeria is currently experiencing its longest period of civilian rule since independence, despite the fact that the presidential elections of 2003 and 2007 were characterized by irregularities and violence.

However, the government continues to experience ethnic and religious tensions in its attempts to reform a petroleum-based economy. In January 2014, Nigeria assumed a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council for the 2014-15 term. The country is keen to attract foreign investment, but these efforts are hindered by inadequate infrastructure and power supply as well as by security challenges, prominently represented by the presence of the extremist Islamist group *Boko Haram* - in the North Eastern part of the country since September 2010.

This militant Islamist group is fighting to overthrow the government and create an Islamic state, through a wave of bombings, assassinations and abductions that have been carried out over the recent years. It promotes a version of Islam which forbids (from here the term *haram*; so Boko Haram means “Western education is forbidden”) Muslims from taking part in any political or social activity associated with Western society, including voting in elections and receiving a secular education. The terrorist group considers the country governed by non-believers, even if there is a Muslim president in power. It has declared a caliphate in the territories it controls.

Economic situation and employment

Economic situation²

Nigeria has emerged as Africa's largest economy with its 2014 GDP estimated at US\$ 594 billion.³

Oil has been the dominant source of government revenues since the 1970s. Regulatory constraints and security risks have limited new investment in oil and natural gas, and Nigeria's oil production contracted in 2012 and 2013. Nevertheless, the Nigerian economy has continued to grow, particularly in the fields of agriculture, telecommunications, wholesale and retail, and services. The banking sector was also recapitalized, following the global financial crises since 2008.

¹ CIA World Fact book, 2014. Africa, Nigeria. Available from www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html (accessed 9 March 2015); BBC News, 2015. Africa, Nigeria profile. Available from www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13949550 (accessed 16 March 2015); The Economist, 2015. *Nigeria*. Available from <http://country.eiu.com/nigeria> (accessed 16 March 2015).

² CIA World Fact book, 2014. Africa, Nigeria. Available from www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html (accessed 9 March 2015).

³ International Monetary Fund (IMF), 2014, World Economic Outlook (WEO) Database. Available from www.gfmag.com/global-data/country-data/nigeria-gdp-country-report (accessed 27 March 2015).

This notwithstanding, there has been no significant decline of poverty, despite the Government's implementation of policies and programmes aimed at increasing transparency, encouraging the diversification of the country's economy and improving fiscal management.

Employment opportunities⁴

Despite the growth of the economy, Nigeria continues to be characterized by low per capita income, high rates of unemployment and under-employment and extreme poverty. According to different surveys - carried out by National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), National Directorate for Employment (NDE), National Manpower Board (NMB) and Centre for Investment, Sustainable Development, Management and Environment (CISME)⁵ - close to a quarter (25 %) of the Nigerian labour force may be unemployed. The latest survey on unemployment in Nigeria by NBS shows that there were more unemployed females (24.9 per cent) than males (17.7 per cent) (NBS, 2011). When distributed among the different educational qualifications, unemployment rate is highest (24.6%) among young Nigerians with Bachelor's degrees or Higher National Diplomas (HND).

Formal job opportunities across the country are mostly in banks, oil companies, telecommunications and other private companies, manufacturing industries and fast food ventures. Self-employment has contributed significantly to the employment rates in Nigeria. A majority of those who are self-employed can be found in small-scale agriculture or enterprise sectors of the economy.

Vacancies are advertised through different means: by word of mouth, internally, through newspaper adverts or on the job opportunities websites.

Below are some web links for job offers online in Nigeria:

www.nelexnigeria.com/
www.jobberman.com/
www.nairaland.com/jobs
<https://ngcareers.com/jobs>
www.jobnetworknigeria.com/

Particularly, for low-skilled profiles:

www.hotnigerianjobs.com/category/unskilled/unskilled-jobs-in-nigeria
<http://jobseeker.ng/category/jobs-industries-in-nigeria/unskilled-jobs-in-nigeria/>

Generally, the requirements for accessing the labour market involve the submission of curriculum vitae and three references from a former employer or educational institution.

⁴ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2009. *Returning to Nigeria – Country Information*. IOM Project “Enhanced and Integrated Approach regarding Information on Return and Reintegration in the Countries of Origin – IRRICO II”, IOM, Geneva; International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

⁵ For more information: NBS, www.nigerianstat.gov.ng/ ; CBN, www.cenbank.org/ ; NDE, <http://nde.org.ng/> ; CISME, <http://cismenigeria.com/>.

Furthermore, in order to work in the civil service of the Federation, one needs to apply through the Federal Civil Service Commission, presenting the following documents:

- West African Examination Council (WAEC) Certificate – certificate for secondary school leavers);
- University degree certificate;
- Local government identification signed by the chairman of the local government, the Secretary to the L.G or a Higher Personnel Manager;
- National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) discharge certificate;
- Nigerian Certificate in Education (NCE), if applicable;
- Birth certificate or age declaration;
- Marriage certificate, if applicable;
- One passport photograph.

Once the forms are collected, the Commission records the applications. Nevertheless, applicants can be employed if there are vacancies declared by the ministries. Moreover, those applicants who own the Secondary school leaving certificate can be employed directly by the ministries.

Unemployment assistance⁶

The National Directorate for Employment (NDE) – established in 1986 to tackle unemployment problems in the country – has developed four major programmes:

- (a) Vocational Skills Development (VSD) programme:⁷
 - (i) Objective: to provide technical and vocational training for the unemployed youths, in order to enable them to be self-reliant and self-employed;
 - (ii) Target group: unemployed school leavers and school dropouts, persons with special needs and fresh graduates from tertiary institutions;
 - (iii) Strategies: NDE vocational skill acquisition training centres and informal sector operators such as master crafts-men and women
 - (iv) Schemes under the programme:
 - a. National Open Apprenticeship Scheme (NOAS) through the basic and advanced schemes (B-NOAS and A-NOAS);
 - b. School-On-Wheels (SOW)
 - c. Resettlement Loan Scheme (RLS);
 - d. Partnership in Skills Training (PIST);
 - e. Skills Acquisition Training Centres (SATC);
 - f. Community Based Training Scheme (CBTS);

⁶ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge; National Directorate of Employment (NDE). Available from <http://nde.org.ng/> (accessed 18 March 2015).

⁷ NDE, Programme Depts, Vocational Skills Development programme. Available from <http://nde.org.ng/programme-depts/vocational-skills-development-programme/> (accessed 18 March 2015).

- g. Skills acquisition training for persons with special needs (vulnerable);
- h. Lady Chauffeur Training Scheme (LCTS);
- i. Skills Acquisition Training in the Constituencies (SATIC);
- j. Special Training on Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for graduates of tertiary institutions.

(b) Small Scale Enterprises (SSE) programme: ⁸

- (i) Objective: enhancing small scale entrepreneurs' knowledge of basic entrepreneurial requirements and constraints, as they play a significant role in the development of the country's economy;
- (ii) Target group: unemployed graduates of tertiary institutions, retired public/private sector workers, also school leavers and artisans;
- (iii) Strategies: entrepreneurship/business training on how to set up and develop own business; internship to offices to acquire practical experience and assistance in obtaining loans from the Nigerian Agricultural, Co-operative and Rural Development Bank (NACRDB) to set up own business;
- (iv) Partners: national and international agencies/organizations in the field of technical support, capacity building assistance and programme delivery;
- (v) Schemes under the programme:
 - a. Start Your Own Business (SYOB) for graduates of tertiary institutions;
 - b. Basic Business Training (BBT) for school leavers and artisans;
 - c. Improve Your Own Business (IYB) for ongoing businesses as a mentoring/support activity;
 - d. Qik Qik Business Ownership Scheme;
 - e. EasyBiz Scheme;
 - f. Women Employment Branch (WEB).

(c) Rural Employment Promotion (REP) programme: ⁹

- (i) Objectives: generating rural employment and improving incomes through the adoption of improved technologies in post-harvest handling, storage and processing, agribusiness engagements, and promoting other non-farm rural employment activities;
- (ii) Target group: school leavers, graduates of tertiary institutions, retirees, people with special needs, among others, in order to stimulate the interest of all categories of the unemployed people in rural areas for the successful management of different demand-driven viable agribusinesses;

⁸ NDE, Programme Depts, Small Scale Enterprises Programme. Available from <http://nde.org.ng/programme-depts/small-scale-enterprises-programme/> (accessed 18 March 2015).

⁹ NDE, Programme Depts, Rural Employment Promotion Programme. Available from <http://nde.org.ng/programme-depts/rural-employment-promotion-programme/> (accessed 18 March 2015).

- (iii) Strategies: programme beneficiaries are trained on modern agricultural and agro-allied practices to stem the rural-urban drift of the youths;
 - (iv) Schemes and projects under REP:
 - a. Rural Agricultural Training Scheme (RADTS) through the Agricultural Training Centres (ASTCs);
 - b. Integrated Farming Training Scheme (IFTS);
 - c. Rural Handicraft Training Scheme (RHTS);
 - d. Post RADTS Training (PRT);
 - e. NDE Agric Park Project.
- (d) Special Public Works (SPW) programme:¹⁰
- (i) Objective: reducing unemployment to its barest minimum among the youths;
 - (ii) Target group: graduates of tertiary institutions;
 - (iii) Strategies: providing immediate temporary employment with labour intense techniques – in terms of public projects – while participants acquire new skills and exchange experiences;
 - (iv) Schemes under the programme:
 - a. Environmental Beautification Training Scheme (EBTS);
 - b. Graduate Attachment Programme (GAP);
 - c. Graduate Coaching Scheme (GCS);
 - d. Renewable Energy Training Scheme (RETS);
 - e. SPW Housing Scheme (SPW HS);
 - f. Community Development Scheme (CDS);
 - g. Neighbourhood Watch Scheme (NWS);
 - h. Labour Based Training Scheme (LBTS).

The National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) also deserves attention. Established in 2001, NAPEP implements policies on poverty eradication, monitoring and coordinating all poverty reduction efforts at federal, state and local level, in line with the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The following schemes are available under the programme: (a) Youth Empowerment Scheme (YES), (b) Capacity Enhancement Scheme (CES), (c) Community Enlightenment and Sensitization Scheme (COMESS), (d) Social Welfare Service Scheme (SOWESS), (e) Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS), and (f) Natural Resources Development and Conservation Scheme (NRDCS).

¹⁰ NDE, Programme Depts, Special Public Works Programme. Available from <http://nde.org.ng/programme-depts/special-public-works-programme/> (accessed 18 March 2015).

Reintegration assistance

Reintegration assistance¹¹

One of the many migration management services that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) offers to migrants and governments is Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR). AVRR programmes target returnees – irregular and stranded migrants, labour migrants, survivors of trafficking and unaccompanied children – wishing to return voluntarily to their countries of origin.

The AVRR process involves different stages of intervention: (a) in host countries, by securing travel documents and counselling migrants on the conditions for return and reintegration in their countries of origin and medical evaluations; (b) in transit countries, through coordination with airport officials and escort, and (c) in countries of origin, through reception and reintegration assistance.

Since 2001 – when the AVRR programme was set up in Nigeria – at least 3,000 returnees from more than 20 countries from Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa have benefited from IOM's assistance.

The reintegration assistance provided to returning migrants depends on the available conditions in the return country and the needs of individual returnees. Eligibility claims can vary from EUR 500 to USD 7,000 per beneficiary. The activities covered by the assistance are generally: (a) setting up small businesses, (b) vocational training courses, (c) educational support – in terms of school fees for adults and children, for example, (d) medical assistance, and (e) provision or support in temporary or long term accommodation. The most successful reintegration activity among returnees is small business start-up, which enables returnees to have a source of income after arrival back in Nigeria. In this process, the motivation of returnees is very important for the sustainability of reintegration processes.

Moreover, reintegration assistance in Nigeria derives from government programmes, namely: (a) the National Directorate for Employment (NDE) through the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) – as specified in the previous section, (b) the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP), (c) the Committee for the Support of Dignity of Women (COSUDOW), (d) the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme of UBEC, (e) the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), (f) the Lift Above Poverty (LAPO), and (g) the Nigerian Agricultural, Cooperative and Rural Development Bank (NACRDB) –

¹¹ International Organization for Migration (IOM). *Assisted Voluntary Return and Reintegration (AVRR) Project Roundtable* (April 2013). Available from www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/news-and-views/events/events-listing/assisted-voluntary-return-and-re.html ; International Organization for Migration (IOM). *Nigeria, Newsletter* (Issue 1, February 2012). Available from www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/shared/shared/mainsite/activities/countries/docs/nigeria/IOM-Nigeria-Newsletter-Issue1-February2012.pdf.

which is the new Bank of Agriculture (BOA).¹² However, support from governments or external donors is necessary.

Business set-up opportunities

Established in 2003, the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN¹³) aims to promote the development of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector in the country. SMEDAN's objectives include: (a) developing policy, (b) processing and disseminating business information, (c) establishing business support programs, (d) building capacity and promoting services, and (e) enhancing MSME access to finance. Particularly, the last aspect entails assistance to MSMEs to prepare bankable business plans, appraisal and recommendation of project proposals from MSMEs to partner-financial institutions and, finally, collaboration with promoters of specialized (micro) finance schemes for the benefit of MSMEs. In order to achieve the above objectives, many activities are carried out, such as monitoring and co-ordination of the MSME sector, as well as promotion of instruments and support services for relative operations.¹⁴

MSMEs currently represent 96% of the businesses in the country and contribute 75% of the national employment. Nevertheless, MSMEs face different challenges, such as limited access to affordable finance and to Business Development Service (BDS), as well as often inadequate infrastructures and high costs of doing business. The National Enterprise Development Programme (NEDEP) was created to address these challenges. It focuses on Skills Acquisitions, Entrepreneurship Training/Business Development Service (BDS) and Access to Finance, aiming at generating an estimated 5 million direct and indirect jobs between 2013 and 2015. The programme – coordinated by SMEDAN – is based on the success of similar enterprise development initiatives in other African and Asian countries.¹⁵

Other programmes are SPX (Sub-contracting and Partnership Exchange) and LIFE (Learning Initiative for Entrepreneurs). The Sub-contracting and Partnership Exchange – developed by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) more than 20 years ago – is a technical cooperation programme aiming to link domestic enterprises in developing countries to the supply chains of international companies. SPX represents a global network with 75 SPXs in 41 countries – the first established SPX in Nigeria is domiciled at the SMEDAN Business Support Centre in Lagos. Particularly, the programme focuses on global best practice methodology through four components: (a) supplier profiling, (b) benchmarking, (c) supplier capacity building, and (d) matchmaking. The objectives include, on the one hand, awareness raising of the SPX programme among MSMEs, government institutions and buyers and, on the other hand, support of MSMEs in the country in order to obtain the recognition and participation of

¹² For more information: NDE, <http://nde.org.ng/> ; NAPTIP, www.naptip.gov.ng/ ; COSUDOW, <http://cosudowlagos.org/home/> ; UBEC, <http://ubeconline.com/> ; SMEDAN, www.smedan.gov.ng/ ; LAPO, <http://lapo-nigeria.org/> ; BOA, www.bankofagricultureng.com/.

¹³ Small & Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN). Available from www.smedan.gov.ng/ (accessed 1 April 2015).

¹⁴ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

¹⁵ Small & Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), Programmes, NEDEP. Available from www.smedan.gov.ng/index.php/progarmmes (accessed 1 April 2015).

domestic and foreign buyers – operating at national, regional and international level – in the global supply chain.¹⁶

The LIFE programme is directed to people starting up, running or working in small enterprises. It helps them overcome the daily challenges to growth and efficiency of their companies, combining business and technology through certified trainings on Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The targeted audience is large: from people wanting to set up their own micro-enterprises – or already running them – to people interested in basic business concepts, in learning how ICT improves their work, in exchanging ideas and networking with other entrepreneurs, and so forth. To best meet the various degrees of experience in business and technology of participants, five different entrepreneurship levels exist in the LIFE programme (IMAGINE, PLAN, START, GROW, INNOVATE).¹⁷

Procedures to start self-employment¹⁸

In order to start any business in Nigeria, it is required by law to register it with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) – regulated by the Companies Act of 1990.

Some useful links for CAC forms and for state offices:

<http://new.cac.gov.ng/home/forms/>
<http://new.cac.gov.ng/home/state-offices/>

Vocational training courses

Vocational training courses – on the federal and state level – are available in different areas, including computer training, hotel management, secretarial administration, auto-mechanic and carpentry, arts and crafts work, pottery and ceramic training, hair dressing, fashion design.¹⁹

Below are some useful links with information on the vocational training courses offered in the country:

http://exced.ucoz.com/index/vocational_enterprise_schools_in_nigeria/0-172
www.itf-nigeria.com/skill_center.php

Moreover, SMEDAN's Enterprise Development and Promotion Department promotes vocational and entrepreneurial skill training. It is a structured two-week programme that involves training and counseling, depending on the areas of clients' interests.²⁰

¹⁶ Small & Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), Programmes, What is SPX. Available from www.smedan.gov.ng/index.php/progarmmes/what-is-spx (accessed 1 April 2015).

¹⁷ Small & Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN), Programmes, LIFE. Available from www.smedan.gov.ng/index.php/progarmmes/life (accessed 1 April 2015).

¹⁸ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

¹⁹ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

Medical care

Health care system: general information²¹

The Federal Ministry of Health is in charge of the health care system, coordinating all health services throughout the country. Health services are also the responsibility of the state governments with regards to the hospitals in towns or large cities.

It is necessary to distinguish between public or state-owned hospitals, on the one hand, and private hospitals, on the other hand. Public hospitals include General Hospitals, University Teaching and Specialist Hospitals, Federal Medical Centres and comprehensive health centres. As opposed to private hospitals, public hospitals are less expensive, although some of them lack adequate hospital equipment or amenities and patients may experience significant delays in accessing required health care.

Below are some useful links with information on the Teaching and Specialist Hospitals, Federal Medical Centres, General Hospitals and special hospitals in Nigeria:

www.health.gov.ng/index.php/parastatals/teaching-hospitals

www.health.gov.ng/index.php/parastatals/federal-medical-centres

www.health.gov.ng/index.php/parastatals/specialty-hospitals

In order to access hospital services, generally, a deposit must be made before treatment is carried out and payment is due as soon as treatment is complete. If a returnee has a medical history, he/she should obtain a referral letter from the hospital where he/she was undergoing treatment. Alternatively, the returnee needs to pay a registration fee to the hospital and to be able to cover his/her own medical costs.

In Nigeria, many hospitals specialize in different ailments and people choose them depending on their medical needs. At the same time, general hospitals provide medical visits with specialized doctors, such as dentists, oculists, gynecologists, and so forth.

Moreover, numerous pharmacies exist throughout the country. The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) ensures that they are regulated and sell genuine medicines to Nigerian people. When it comes to different medications, they are generally available, although sometimes can be expensive.

²⁰ Small & Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN). Available from www.smedan.gov.ng/ (accessed 1 April 2015).

²¹ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2009. *Returning to Nigeria – Country Information*. IOM Project “Enhanced and Integrated Approach regarding Information on Return and Reintegration in the Countries of Origin – IRRICO II”, IOM, Geneva; International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

National health insurance²²

After different efforts to set up the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS), participation in the programme involves a contributor registering with NHIS approved Health Maintenance Organizations (HMOs). Hence, contributors register with a primary health care provider of their choice – private or public – from an NHIS approved list of providers supplied by their HMO. Upon registration, a contributor will be issued an identity card (ID) with a personal identification number and, upon presentation of the ID card, treatment will be provided. Moreover, contributors are free to change their primary health care provider after six months – if not satisfied with its services – while the HMO is responsible for paying health care providers for their services.

Psychosocial support²³

The Social Welfare Department of the Federal Ministry for Youth and Social Development is responsible for many services, such as family and child welfare services, adoption of children, institutional care of elderly people and of juvenile delinquents and, finally, rehabilitation and vocational training of destitute and disabled people. There is also the Federal Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development supporting women and children's interests.

It is noteworthy that numerous activities are implemented in this field by IOM Nigeria in partnership with UN Agencies, such as UNICEF, UNFPA, WHO and NGOs, including the Federation of Muslim Women Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN), Interfaith Mediation Center (IMC) and Nigerian Red Cross (NRC), in partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).²⁴

²² International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2009. *Returning to Nigeria – Country Information*. IOM Project “Enhanced and Integrated Approach regarding Information on Return and Reintegration in the Countries of Origin – IRRICO II”, IOM, Geneva; International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

²³ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2009. *Returning to Nigeria – Country Information*. IOM Project “Enhanced and Integrated Approach regarding Information on Return and Reintegration in the Countries of Origin – IRRICO II”, IOM, Geneva.

²⁴ For more information: IOM Nigeria www.iom.int/cms/en/sites/iom/home/where-we-work/africa-and-the-middle-east/central-and-west-africa/nigeria.html ; UNICEF Nigeria, www.unicef.org/nigeria/ ; UNFPA Nigeria, <http://nigeria.unfpa.org/> ; WHO, Nigeria Country Office, www.afro.who.int/en/nigeria/who-country-office-nigeria.html ; FOMWAN, www.fomwan.org/ ; IMC Nigeria, www.imcnigeria.org/ , www.uri.org/cooperation_circles/detail/imck ; NRC, www.ifrc.org/en/what-we-do/where-we-work/africa/nigerian-red-cross-society/ , www.redcrossnigeria.org/home.html

Housing²⁵

Housing availability

Generally, there are three types of owned housing in Nigeria:

- (a) Government-owned housing, namely, residential houses usually allocated to civil servants and government employees of certain grades and categories. Rent is usually deducted monthly from salaries.
- (b) Privately-owned housing for the public, namely, buildings owned by individuals where usually the landlord requests a minimum of two years' rent as an advance payment. In some areas, rent is payable in USD.
- (c) Houses owned by companies/private organizations/banks, allocated to the staff of these entities.

There is no special accommodation for returnees without a family in their country of origin. However, they should be aware that rents in major cities are high and difficult to come by.

Housing space and renting costs

Concerning housing space, different options exist: (a) one-room accommodation with shared facilities, (b) a self-contained room (with kitchen, toilet and bathroom), (c) a one, two, three, four bedroom flat, and (d) a bungalow or a duplex.

To rent accommodation, clients can address their requests to estate agents – throughout the country – with the details of the type of accommodation, location and budget they are looking for. Advance payment has to be made to a landlord for a specific period – usually for a one-year to a two-year period.

The costs of rent depend on the type of apartment, the part of the country and the location of the property. For example, one-room accommodation with shared facilities could cost as low as NGN 30,000 (238 USD) per year in states like Benue and Enugu. However, the costs of accommodation are generally high in the major cities such as Abuja, Lagos and Port Harcourt, although there is no fixed price for accommodation.

Below are several web links indicating current rates for various types of property for rent in Nigeria:

www.olx.com.ng/houses-apartments-for-rent-cat-363

www.nigeriaproertycentre.com/for-rent

www.privateproperty.com.ng/property-for-rent-in-nigeria/1.htm

www.lamudi.com.ng/

²⁵ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2009. *Returning to Nigeria – Country Information*. IOM Project “Enhanced and Integrated Approach regarding Information on Return and Reintegration in the Countries of Origin – IRRICO II”, IOM, Geneva; International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

For those interested in buying property – most private houses are bought through estate agents – there are no basic requirements, except for the availability of funds. Some financial institutions will provide loans to individuals or companies for purchasing properties, but it is necessary to be underwritten with collateral.

Moreover, although there are no social grants available in the country, housing provisions for vulnerable persons exist. For instance, there are shelters and safe houses for victims of trafficking in many states of Nigeria, such as Lagos, Abuja, Benin City, Enugu, Sokoto, Kano and Akwa Ibom. These are managed by the National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons (NAPTIP). Other shelters, provided for female victims of violence, street children and abandoned babies, are managed by NGOs and state governments.

Education

Educational system²⁶

The Nigerian government has the major responsibility in this field, even if in recent years the private sector has been increasingly involved in primary and secondary education.

Primary/elementary schools deliver western style education, apart from Koranic schools which, in some parts of the country, impart knowledge gained from Islam. The duration of primary schooling is six years, starting from the age of four.

The duration of secondary/high schooling is also six years; however, secondary/high schools are divided into two cycles, i.e. junior and senior secondary education. To be admitted into secondary schools, it is mandatory to pass the Common Entrance Examination.

To enter a university, an individual needs to pass the Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB) Examination, in addition to obtaining a minimum of five credits at High School through the exams of the West African Examination Council (WAEC) or the National Examinations Council (NECO).²⁷ Furthermore, universities also set their own admission exams for candidates.

To enter polytechnics and colleges of education, applicants need to pass the Polytechnic Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (POLYJAMB) Examination.

Moreover, there are special schools for some categories of vulnerable people, for example, Pacelli School for blind people, Atanda Olu School for disabled people, and SOS Social Centre.

²⁶ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2009. *Returning to Nigeria – Country Information*. IOM Project “Enhanced and Integrated Approach regarding Information on Return and Reintegration in the Countries of Origin – IRRICO II”, IOM, Geneva; International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

²⁷ For more information: NECO, www.necoportal.com

Costs of education²⁸

There are no fixed costs for education in Nigeria. However, private schools are usually more expensive than state schools. More specifically, the costs of education depend on the type of school, on the quality of education it offers and, sometimes, on the location.

Some examples of current school rates (which do not include the costs of books) are listed below:

- Public primary schools – free of charge, however, from time to time, some levies are expected to be paid;
- Private primary schools – cost as much as private secondary schools;

- Public secondary schools – cost from 200 to 500 USD per term (three terms in a year);
- Private secondary schools – cost from 1,000 to 2,000 USD per term (three terms in a year);

- Federal/state universities – cost from 600 to 2,500 USD per session (two semesters);
- Private universities – cost from 4,000 to 7,500 USD per session (two semesters).

Some state governments as well as private companies, NGOs, development agencies and other voluntary organizations may also have scholarship programs for educational purposes. Moreover, oil companies usually have a university scholarship quota for students from the oil producing states in the country.

Recognition of foreign diplomas²⁹

Foreign diplomas are recognized and accepted in Nigeria. Verification is carried out and by individual schools; however, returning pupils/students should also submit a transcript and evidence of previously attended schools and other educational qualifications.

²⁸ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

²⁹ International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2014. *Country Fact Sheet – Nigeria*, IOM and Bundesamt Für Migration und Flüchtlinge.

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