

UPF Nigeria with Nigerian government teach Character Education in pilot schools

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UPF Nigeria in collaboration with the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) and the Federal Capital Territory Universal Basic Education Board (FCT-UBEB) organized a 3-days capacity building workshop for headteachers and teachers of Character Education in pilot schools in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria. Other stakeholders that participated in the workshop were representatives of government agencies in the education sector, including

- Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC)
- Nigerian Educational Research and Developments Council (NERDC)
- Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN)
- National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE)
- National Teachers Institute (NTI)
- Federal Capital Territory Administration - Education Secretariat
- Education Secretaries of the Six Area Councils of the FCT.
- Other agencies represented include
- National Orientation Agency (NAO)
- Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC)

The training which took place at the National Merit Award House, Maitama, Abuja. The aim was to acquaint headteachers firsthand with the content of the character education as well as serve as refresher for the designated Character Education pilot teachers in pilot schools, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the program and achieving the desired result of positive character building among learners. In 2017-2018, True Mother and International HQ sponsored the training of 240 public school teachers as character educators in the Federal Capital Territory FCT to begin a pilot program in collaboration with the FCT-UBEB.

Secondly, this workshop was to refresh members of the Central Working Committee (CWC) set up to drive the Peace and Character Education Program nationwide with the detailed content of the program. And thirdly, to introduce the program to key stakeholders for wider outreach to various sectors of society.

Opening Session

Tuesday 27 September, the workshop commenced exactly at 10:00am with an opening session. Christian and Muslim prayers were offered by volunteers. Welcome remarks were made by Brigadier General Paul Boroh (retired) - Chairman, UPF-Nigeria Peace and Security Committee. A keynote address was presented by UPF-Africa Vice-President - Dr Paterné Zinsou, representing UPF-Africa Chairman, Dr Katherine Rigney. A goodwill message was presented by Mr. Robin Marsh, Secretary General, UPF-UK. More goodwill messages were presented by Mr. Olumayowa Aleshin - Director, Teachers Professional Development, Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC); Dr A. K. T. Otunjiyi - Director, Educational Support Services and International Partnership Department of the National Commission on Colleges of Education (NCCE); Barrister Tessy Nnalue - Director of Orientation and Behavioral

Modification, National Orientation Agency (NOA); and Mr. Umoh Mfon Sunday - Directorate of Youth Mobilization, Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC). The message to declare the workshop open was presented by Dr. Andrew Alih Apeh - Chief Education Officer, Federal Ministry Education (representing the Director of Schools Support Services).

Daily attendance of participants was taken in accordance with UPF guidelines to ascertain their level of commitment and participation up to the end of the workshop. The following topics were exhaustively treated during the 3-days:



Day 1

- A brief background of the program and a review of the workshop schedule
- An introduction to character education
- Rebuilding national character and morality: past and present methods of character education
- Religion and World Scriptures: An overview of major religions.

Day 2

- The Divine Nature - how can we know GOD, the ultimate reality?
- The Conscience - Based on Reason or based on Heart?
- Conscience and the Golden Rule
- Human beings as meaning seeking beings
- A look at the culture of sexual openness and misunderstanding concerning sexual purity



Day 3

- Patriotism and Public Service: An overview of citizenship, patriotism, and public

service.(Presentations on the above topics were made by Rev. George M. Ogurie, UPF Africa-West Sub-Regional Director)

Presentation of action plan for the training of 4,560 teachers nationwide as Peace and Character Educators - by Ambassador Abubakar Dantsoho (CWC Co-Chair)

Presentation on development of micro-level action plans by Professor Toun Akinsolu (Planning Dept of UBEC; CWC Member)

Closing remarks and goodwill messages by Professor Queen Victoria Abike Adesuyi (Royal Matriarch from Osun State of Nigeria) and Professor Joseph Golwa (former Director General of NIPCS; CWC Member)

Closing message of congratulations by Dr Jin Sung Bae, Director of Hyo-Jeong Academic Foundation

Conclusion

The workshop came to an end at about 5:30 pm, Thursday 29th September 2022. The consensus of participants was that they were inspired, uplifted and empowered. With a high level of camaraderie established, they were determined to render their cooperation toward the expansion and success of the program.

Feedback from participants at the training are summarized as follows:

The organization and arrangement for the workshop were excellent.

The financial and human resources deployed on the workshop were highly appreciated

Most importantly, the effort and commitment of facilitators were highly commendable. (Collected by Dr Bilkisu Adedoyin, Dept of Chemistry, University of Abuja)