

FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

PRESS RELEASE

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**MINISTER CALLS FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT IN HUMAN CAPACITY BUILDING**

The Honourable Minister of State for Education, Dr. Suwaiba Said Ahmed, has stated that one of the most important high-priority areas of challenge is human capacity development, and to push for that, there is a need to ensure that the youth have the opportunity to develop themselves.

The Minister made this known when she received Eniola Shokunbi, a 12-year-old girl from the USA, who paid her a courtesy visit at her office in Abuja on 23rd May 2025.

The Minister stated that Nigeria needs people with dreams and innovation to identify problems and come up with solutions, adding that under the administration of President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, the Ministry is working on programs that are actually creating opportunities for the youth.

The Minister commended her vision and zeal to come to Nigeria to visit schools and share some inspiration with students, as well as to learn about plans for Nigerian students, their future as it relates to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics (STEAM).

The Minister disclosed to her that the initiatives have already been identified. She then assured Eniola that the Nigerian government is working towards achieving them and giving opportunities to girls, eliminating the barriers that are actually affecting them.

"We have actually identified key challenges, especially for girls, and we are trying to give them access and eliminate major barriers, issues around teacher quality, and issues around the availability of teachers are issues that this government is targeting," she said.

According to the Minister, part of the key initiative is the Technical Vocational Education and Training (TVET), which is for skill acquisition and training for the youth.

Earlier, Eniola Shokunbi stated that her mission to Nigeria is to visit schools and inspire students, especially girls who are not inspired and those who don't believe in themselves, and for every girl or woman to know that they have a voice and could also become agents of change in the world.

She noted that information and persistence can make people go anywhere they dream of being. Speaking further, Eniola said she meets people who she believes will send her message across, people that make her mission accomplished, adding that she reaches out to government officials and people in the community.

She therefore pleaded with the government to take decisions that will not affect citizens. She, however, stated that she is grateful to people who have ideas more than hers and still make time to listen to her.

Speaking during the visit, the Director, Science and Technology, Dr. Mrs. Olodo, stated that the government has come up with programs such as Junior Engineers, Technicians, and Scientists (JETS), STEAM, and STEM in different states of the country.

She mentioned that young ones in Basic Schools and those in post-Basic Schools come up with innovations, and those who do well are awarded scholarships to further their education in higher institutions.

She revealed that they have a collaboration with the Japanese government, and they invite them every year to continue to retain their interest in STEM and also make them become professionals.

She said that the Honourable Minister has initiated TVET, looking at the situation where there will be a higher percentage of girls that will engage in the program, adding that the government is making provisions for granting loans that will not be stressful to pay at the end of their education.

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