

SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)

Ignition - Primary Space Education (1)

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ASTRONOMY EDUCATION OUTREACH PROGRAMME IN NIGERIA -A REPORT OF
ASTRONOMERS WITHOUT BORDERS(AWB)ACTIVITIES IN THE PAST ONE YEAR.

Abstract

The study focused on the activities of the Nigerian Chapter of the Astronomers Without Borders (AWB) in collaboration with the National Space Research and Development Agency (NASRDA) in taking Astronomy to elementary school kids across Nigeria. Nigeria with a population of over 173million people, has 43.9% of this population aged 0-14years. There are approximately 76million kids under 14years across the Nation, majority of who studies have shown are alien to the subject of Astronomy. A team of young Scientists under the aegis of Astronomers Without Borders (AWB) in collaboration with the Nigerian Space Agency started out to reach out to the Nigerian kids, teaching them about astronomy and creating awareness about space science and technology in general. A number of activities have been embarked upon by this group in taking Astronomy to these school children. Some of these activities are targeted towards stimulating the interest of elementary school kids in Astronomy. There have been workshop sessions where school kids are brought together and taught Astronomy. Also, teachers too have been carried along in the program tagged 'Train-the-Trainers' teachers' workshops. The aim is to train science teachers in schools so they could in turn teach their pupils about Astronomy. Schools are encouraged to source for locally available materials to fabricate some resources to complement the limited resources that are being used in teaching the kids. Thousands of elementary school kids have so far been reached since inception, both in the rural and urban parts of Nigeria. Both the print and electronic media have been used to propagate the activities of AWB in Nigeria. The responses from kids across Nigeria have been encouraging, as the National Coordinator of AWB in Nigeria, I have been an integral part of the various activities embarked upon by the team and the impact assessment of Astronomy education on kids' school performances especially in the sciences have been very amazing. There is increased awareness about Astronomy among the school kids in Nigeria, teachers have been encouraged to emphasize on existing Astronomy topics in their teaching, while efforts are on going to engage the policy makers in charge of curriculum development to introduce Astronomy in the schools' curricula.