

Case Study 4

# PrepClass: Introducing educational tutoring 2.0 in Nigeria



**Founding year:** 2013

**Geography:** Nigeria

**Founding team:** Chukwuwezam Obanor – Co-Founder and CEO  
Olumide Ogunlana – Co-Founder and COO

**Tweet pitch:** A digital tutoring marketplace that connects learners and tutors.  
[prepclass.com.ng](http://prepclass.com.ng)

At over 80 million, Nigeria has the world's third largest population of youth under 15 year.<sup>1</sup> Yet, in terms of quality education and enrolment rates, its primary to higher school system is ranked 120 out of 135 countries globally.<sup>2</sup> Currently, the government allocates only 7.1 per cent of its expenditure to education, less than a third of the UN's recommended minimum of 25 per cent for countries seeking rapid development.<sup>3</sup> This significantly affects the quality of education and results in poor teacher remuneration, low teacher attendance rates in public schools and lack of basic infrastructure and facilities.<sup>4</sup>

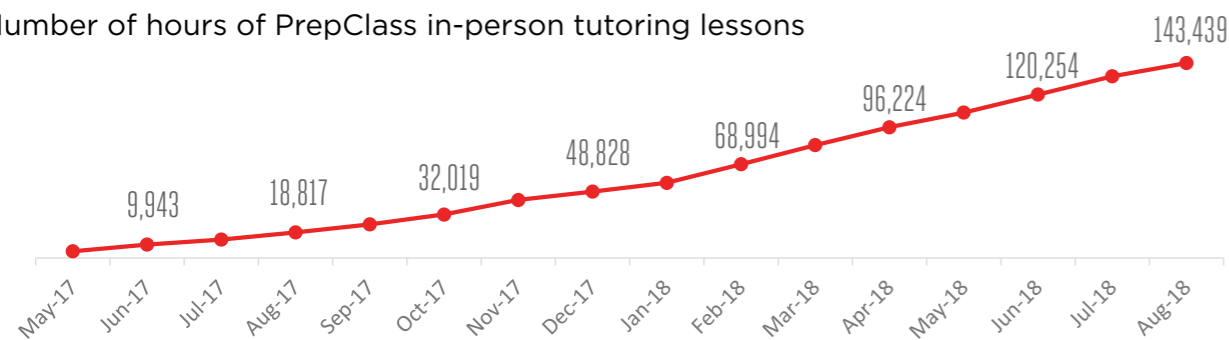
To tackle some of these issues, PrepClass launched a digital platform matching students to teachers. PrepClass enables face-to-face tutoring, either one-on-one or in groups. Through the platform, a pool of teachers who have been interviewed and thoroughly vetted offer their services to learners, providing a source

of income for tutors while improving the education of Nigeria's students. PrepClass tutors work with students aged 4 to 16 years old (K-12 learners) as well as with 16 to 35 year olds with a focus on test preparation (in maths, English and science), language learning and vocational education.

As of October 2018, PrepClass had over 5,154 tutors registered on its platform available to be matched with learners. On average, tutors work with five learners per month. **Between May 2017 and August 2018, over 143,000 hours of face-to-face tutoring have been delivered through the PrepClass platform.** In January 2018, PrepClass launched a mobile app called PrepTest, which provides tutors with a platform to upload educational content for learners. As of October 2018, over 312,000 learners have downloaded the app and accessed nearly 83,000 hours of downloaded educational content.

FIGURE 4

Number of hours of PrepClass in-person tutoring lessons



1 The World Bank, Population aged 0-14 years (percentage of total): <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SPPOP0014.TO.ZS?contextual=population-by-age&end=2017&locations=NG&start=1960&view=chart>  
 2 Nigeria Data Portal: [http://nigeria.opendataforafrica.org/infographics/clwiine/global-competitiveness?indicator=Quality%20of%20primary%20education%2C%201-7%20\(best\)](http://nigeria.opendataforafrica.org/infographics/clwiine/global-competitiveness?indicator=Quality%20of%20primary%20education%2C%201-7%20(best))  
 3 Tope Alake, 12 September 2018, "No Books, No Desks, No Pay: Nigeria's Education System is Failing", Bloomberg, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-09-12/no-books-no-desks-no-pay-nigeria-s-education-is-failing>  
 4 Ogunlana Olumide, 29 May 2017, "Nigeria Has an Acute Shortage of Teachers and Will Require 400,000 More Primary School Teachers between 2012 and 2030—Where Are All The Teachers????", <https://medium.com/@ogunlanaolumide/nigeria-has-an-acute-shortage-of-teacher-and-will-require-400-000-more-primary-school-teachers-15253b9bfff0f>

## How the service works

PrepClass uses an online web platform to recruit, manage and connect tutors to learners seeking academic support. This is how the tutoring service works:

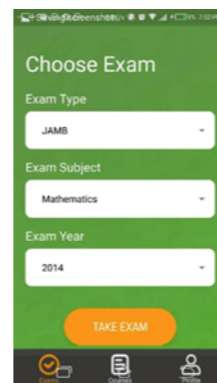
For parents/learners	For teachers/tutors
<p>1  Parents/learners access the PrepClass website or apply via SMS, WhatsApp or by calling PrepClass and entering the learner's details.</p>	<p>1  Tutors complete a registration form on the PrepClass website.<sup>5</sup></p>
<p>2  PrepClass calls the parent/learner to schedule a visit. PrepClass then visits the parent/learner to validate the request and set monthly learning goals.</p>	<p>2  At the discretion of the PrepClass visitation officer, tutors are invited to be interviewed for further vetting and due diligence. During the interview, tutors complete three tests (personality, academic and teacher-student simulation) to establish a cumulative score and tutorial rank. The PrepClass visitation officer gives the tutors feedback on their score.</p>
<p>3  Parent/learner pays a registration fee by cash or via bank transfer (3,000 Naira per learner, or \$8.25).</p>	<p>3  PrepClass provides orientation training to tutors. Tutors are notified of a match with learners<sup>6</sup> in a phone call and are given the opportunity to accept/reject the lessons. If the tutor accepts, a match is made between the tutor and learner(s).<sup>7</sup></p>
<p>4  PrepClass matches learners with the most suitable tutors and notifies learners by SMS and a phone call that they have been matched with a tutor.</p>	<p>4  Tutors hold the tutoring classes with the learner(s).</p>
<p>5  PrepClass lessons between tutors and learners take place at the scheduled time.</p>	<p>5  At the end of each month, tutors send PrepClass feedback, parents/learners are billed and tutors are paid within 48 hours (PrepClass retains a 30 per cent service fee).</p>
<p>6  PrepClass bills the parent/learner at the end of the month. Upon receiving the bill, the parent/learner pays PrepClass and rates/reviews the service in a phone interview.</p>	

5 Tutors fill in a form to inform PrepClass about their academic background, teaching experience, photo for their tutor profile and specify the subjects they will teach, and provide professional/ personal reference.  
 6 Most PrepClass classes have two to three learners.  
 7 PrepClass conducts due diligence before placing tutors in learners' homes. Tutors provide two guarantors and learners/parents sign a contract agreeing an adult must be present during tutoring sessions.

## Working with mobile operators

In January 2018, PrepClass launched a native Android mobile app to enable students to prepare for the JAMB exam, a Nigerian entrance examination for prospective university undergraduates, through video courses.

Partnering with local mobile operators is instrumental to allow PrepClass to scale up its services across Nigeria and beyond. PrepClass team is currently in advanced discussions with the country's largest providers.



## Changing lives

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



The EdTech start-up is helping to address the issue of overcrowded classrooms that currently undermine the quality of education in Nigerian schools. According to The World Bank, the pupil to teacher ratio in Nigeria is 1:34<sup>8</sup> compared to the world average of 1:24. Between May 2017 and August 2018, over 143,000 hours of face-to-face tutoring have been delivered through the PrepClass platform.

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Through in-person tutoring, PrepClass unlocks financial opportunities for teachers. Between January 2015 and September 2018, PrepClass has enabled 5,154 teachers to generate additional income through its platform. The minimum monthly wage for a Nigerian primary school teacher is 18,000 Naira (\$41) while high school teachers earn 37,000 Naira (\$102).<sup>9</sup> Since 2015, the average amount received by PrepClass tutors per month is around 64,000 Naira (\$175).

"PrepClass has completely changed my perspective towards the benefits of being an educator. Prior to working with PrepClass, I earned a little above minimum wage. Now I earn more and my work hours are a lot more manageable. I work with two PrepClass learners for two hours a day, three times a week."

– Anuforo Dominic, PrepClass Tutor



"I'm very impressed with Mr. Blessing's (PrepClass tutor) method of teaching. My children enjoy his sessions and they have helped improve their performance in school."

– Mrs Stevenson, parent of two PrepClass learners

"Ms Anthonia (PrepClass tutor) has been a very effective teacher for my daughter. She is patient and understanding. The lessons have significantly improved my daughter's numeracy."

– Mrs Amosu, parent of a PrepClass learner

## Working with the GSMA Ecosystem Accelerator

PrepClass received a grant from the GSMA Ecosystem Accelerator Innovation Fund in April 2017 to increase the number of tuition sessions completed through the platform by connecting more learners and tutors via a web and mobile app and to develop the digital education content available on the mobile app.

Beyond funding, the Ecosystem Accelerator is supporting PrepClass in engaging with local and regional mobile operators to assess and plan potential partnerships.