

2016 ANNUAL Report
JOINT NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES
(JONAPWD)

JANUARY 2016-DECEMBER 2016

Executive Summary

The National Executive members and management of JONAPWD under my humble leadership has continued to keep faith with the social contract and mandate entrusted in our hands since August, 2014 by ensuring that the interests and aspirations of the over 25 million Persons With Disabilities in Nigeria continue to receive priority attention of governments at all levels, the private sector, local and international development agencies, the media, mainstream CSOs, professional bodies and other critical stakeholders. With the combined efforts of our 36 state chapters, 6 disability clusters and several organizations of persons with disabilities, the National leadership of JONAPWD has provided the veritable hob and front for engagement even at international frontiers; ensuring that the voices and interests of Nigerians with disabilities are given appropriate recognition and respect.

Although our main goal of achieving the enactment of a National Disability Law is still far-fetched, we have largely succeeded in ensuring that disability issues have gained significant national attention across sectors including: political/electoral inclusion and participation, inclusive education, accessible health services, accessible physical infrastructure, transportation, financial inclusion, etc. Nonetheless, recent developments especially in our National Assembly may rekindle our hopes for an eventual passage of the National Disability Bill very soon.

Reports from our state chapters have also been encouraging. While states including Lagos, Plateau, etc are consolidating on implementation of their disability laws and policies, others including Ogun, Edo, Akwa-Ibom, Kwara, etc are making great and progressive efforts towards enacting or strengthening their disability laws and policies across key sectors like education, health, youth development, etc.

The year 2016 was thus a year of progressiveness and continuity on the several gains we made in 2015; strengthening and continuing our advocacy for a National Disability Law, progressing on our efforts to secure total inclusion of voters with disabilities in electoral and political process, sustaining our advocacy for inclusive and accessible basic education for children with disabilities, working for proper financial access and inclusion for persons with disabilities across the country, and working for the proper inclusion of persons with disabilities in the social investment and protection programmes of governments at state and Federal levels.

In 2016, manifestations of increasing public awareness and appreciation of disability issues in Nigeria was recorded as more state and non-state actors reached out to, and engaged with JONAPWD and other organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) at national and state levels. The international profile of JONAPWD as the umbrella body for all OPDs in Nigeria swelled significantly; offering real promises of better socio-economic opportunities for Nigerians with disabilities in the nearest future.

In this Communication, we consider it necessary to once again share with you some of JONAPWD's key activities in 2016 and their impacts in contributing towards attainment of sustainable inclusion for PWDs in Nigeria.

1. Advocating for Inclusive Basic Education for Children with Disabilities in Nigeria:

On the inception of this current JONAPWD leadership, JONAPWD applied for and received a 4-year grant of Forty Million Naira (N40, 000,000 only) from the USAID, through its Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement (SACE) programme in Nigeria to conduct advocacy for inclusive basic education in 3 locations: FCT Abuja, Akwa-Ibom and Kwara states respectively. This grant was also intended to support the rebuilding of JONAPWD'S institutional and management systems; as well as rebrand and reposition the Association as a truly development-oriented disability rights and advocacy organization.

The overall goal of the project is to "Improve the inclusion and access of children with disabilities to quality basic education in Nigeria through effective stakeholders' advocacy engagement" for policy influencing, capacity building and public awareness creation. Having observed that about 3 million Children with Disabilities (representing about 90% in line with UNICEF projections) are out of school in Nigeria, JONAPWD aver that Children with disabilities lack access to an inclusive school environment, hence, declare that all children, including those with disabilities, have a right to quality education. Thus, this project is designed to address the accountability and transparency gaps in the mainstreaming of inclusive practices in the implementation of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria. We are therefore committed to engaging with all critical stakeholders to ensure that:

1. The National Policy on Education reflects access, inclusion and participation of children with disabilities in all aspects of Education system.
2. Regular school environments are inclusive to accommodate the learning needs of children with disabilities.
3. Children with disabilities have access to quality, functional and effective basic education.
4. All discriminatory practices against Children with disabilities in basic education are completely eliminated
5. Raising awareness, building alliances, partnerships and capacities of critical stakeholders on issues of inclusive basic education

2016 marked the second full year of the 4-year project. Within the year under review, JONAPWD Successfully;

- Validated Baseline Survey report. (Stakeholders Validation Meeting)
- Analyzed baseline survey report for the production of factsheets, policy briefs, the MAISE poster and baseline survey report
- Produced and distributed IEC materials to critical stakeholders
- Conducted the Media Lunch
- Conducted a One Day Stakeholders Forum
- Set up Advocacy Technical Teams (ATT) in Focal States
- Conducted Intensive Trainings for ATTs in FCT, Akwa-Ibom & Kwara States
- Coordinated advocacy Visits to critical stakeholders in FCT , Kwara & Akwa-Ibom State
- Engaged effectively the media i.e. Print, Electronic and Social

All of these are in furtherance to increasing support and creating awareness around issues of inclusive education for children with disabilities. JONAPWD also commenced distribution of the INCLUSIVE MATTERS newsletter to critical stakeholders in the FCT. This is symmetrical with our zest to building alliances towards engendering inclusive and accessible schools around project focal states.

Focal State Project Status Updates

FCT: The Inclusive Education Policy Drafting Committee (IEPDC) had been setup and trained on policy formulation, drafting, effective implementation and budget tracking. A zero draft inclusive education policy had been developed. To be reviewed and harmonized during the Committee Review meeting in scheduled for January 2017. There would be Refresher Training scheduled for first quarter in 2017.

Akwa-Ibom: Follow-up Advocacy visits letters currently being distributed. Advocacy visits to continue in January 2017. IEPDC to be set up and inaugurated in the first quarter. There would be Refresher Training scheduled for first quarter in 2017.

Kwara: A policy on inclusive education exist however ATT are currently engaging with the State structures to engender the effectual implementation of the Policy. Kwara State Bill for Persons with Disabilities also to be passed. There would be Refresher Training scheduled for first quarter in 2017.

2. Following-up on the National Disability Bill:

In 2016, the resolve by JONAPWD and other prominent OPDs to follow-up advocacy on the Nigerians with Disabilities Bill payed-off as the Bill was passed by the both houses of the National Assembly (Senate and House of Representatives), however, efforts are currently

been garnered to harmonize the different versions of the Bill passed by both houses of the National Assembly before presidential assent.

This advocacy process for the Bill received significant support from the USAID's Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement (SACE) programme in Nigeria. SACE supported a 3&2-day Stakeholders Meetings in Abuja and Lagos respectively with a view to drawing-up an Advocacy Action Plan towards ensuring that the Bill is passed and signed into law as soon as possible. Very high level meetings were held and attended by stakeholders from both the demand and supply actors with a view to getting everyone's buy-in for the Bill and ensure its passage and signing into law.

SACE also supported JONAPWD to hold a grand reception for the victorious Nigeria's Paralympic athletes at the 2016 RIO Olympics, on the 20th September, 2016 at Barcelona Hotel, Abuja. JONAPWD leveraged on this window of opportunity to further increase her voice on the need for the speedy harmonization and ascent to the Nigeria Disability Bill. The event was another vantage to advocate for the harmonization and ascent to the Nigeria Disability Bill. The Paralympic athletes were officially integrated into the ongoing advocacy campaigns on the Nigeria Disability and the need for inclusive society in Nigeria.

JONAPWD has been working with the SSA To the Nigerian President on Disability Dr. Samuel Ankali who has given his full support to this advocacy process and have promised that President Muhammodu Buhari has given his full support and willingness to sign the Bill into law when it reaches him. and for the first time, leaders of the Nigerian disability community have come together and are all speaking with one voice under the JONAPWD platform to form a common front to engage other stakeholders with regard to the National Disability Bill.

3. Following-up the Independent National Electoral Commission for the Development of INEC's National Disability Policy for Electoral Inclusion for Citizens with Disabilities:

The on-going Stakeholders Consultative Forum on the development of INEC's National Disability Policy for Electoral Inclusion for Citizens with Disabilities which began in 2015 with the support of the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) was continued in 2016. While the Zonal stages of the Stakeholders Consultative Forum was concluded, an Expert Meeting to ratify the second draft of the policy document was held in December, 2016 in Nasarawa state. INEC is expected to ratify and adopt the policy for full implementation in 2017.

JONAPWD's coordination of the Zonal Consultative Forum across the six Geo-Political Zones helped to ensure that PWDs made meaningful contributions towards the development of the draft policy. If fully implemented, the INEC National Disability Policy is

expected to revolutionize access, inclusion and participation of PWDs in the electoral process.

4. JONAPWD's Increasing Influence across National and International Disability Communities:

Within the National frontiers, JONAPWD gained more recognition by key state and non-state actors across different sectors. Within the civil society circles, JONAPWD was elected into the Governing Board of the Transition Monitoring Group (TMG), a foremost civil society coalition of non-governmental organizations in Nigeria concerned with issues relating to democracy, elections and good governance in Nigeria.

Similarly, JONAPWD was also elected into the Steering Committee of the Civil Society Network on Social Protection. This CS Network is being facilitated by Action Aid Nigeria to ensure that the Social Protection and Investment programmes of the Federal Government is fully inclusive of persons with disabilities who are expected to be among major beneficiaries of the programme

Very interesting is that JONAPWD has also been nominated into the Civil society steering committee of Nigerian Extractive Industries Transparency Initiatives (NEITI), JONAPWD would be concentrating on the disability component of all NEITI's programmes/activities and how the Extractives Impact on the lives of Persons with Disabilities.

On the international Arena; JONAPWD has gained significant visibility and greatly recognized, currently JONAPWD is represented on the board of the following International organisations

- Board Member: African Disability Forum; JONAPWD president is representing interest of women with Disabilities on the Board
- Chairperson African Region; Disabled People's International-DPI
- Board Member; West African Federation of Disabled People- WAFODD

5. OTHER NOTABLE ENGAGEMENTS

THE AFRICAN DISABILITY FORUM (ADF)- WEST AFRICAN FEDERATION OF THE DISABLED (WAFOD) INTERNSHIP AND CONSULTATIVE VISIT

The Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD), the umbrella body of all Disabled People's Organization in Nigeria, facilitated the recent internship visit of the West African Federation of the Disabled (WAFOD) representative, Mamadou Sissiko, to Nigeria with support of the African Disability Forum (ADF) and held a Consultative Meeting

with the Humanitarian and Social Affairs Directorate of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which took place at the ECOWAS Commission, Central Business District, Abuja, Nigeria, on the 21st March 2016, in a bid to further strengthen network among African disability stakeholders in partnership with regional Civil Society Organizations towards protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and promoting disability inclusive development agenda in Africa and in the world leveraging on the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) 4 and other legal instruments which supports inclusive plans and programming for persons with disabilities on the Sub-Saharan West African Continent. The visit specifically sought to mainstream Persons with Disabilities in ECOWAS activities and programs, to engender mapping of regional CSOs working around Disability issues, to ascertain the level of implementation of the UNCRPD and the SDGs 4 which Nigeria ratified.

STAKEHOLDERS MEETING ON SEXUAL HEALTH AND RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES HELD AT NATIONAL AGENCY FOR THE CONTROL OF AIDS (NACA)
The Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development through its Rehabilitation Department is collaborating with the NATIONAL AGENCY FOR THE CONTROL OF AIDS (NACA) for the development of a strategy to enhance sexual health and rights of Persons with Disabilities in Nigeria. The FMWASD had wrote to NACA, Gender and OVC Department, to solicit support for the mainstreaming of PWDs in the National HIV/AIDs response especially with the 90:90:90 target and goal set out by NACA to ensure that at least 90% of Nigerians get HIV test and know their status, 90% that are discovered positive are placed on treatment and 90% of those on treatment have suppressed the virus by the year 2030. NACA has developed a new strategic plan for which a component parts strategically deals with Disability issues. It was a stakeholders meeting to develop strategies to mainstream PWDs into the National HIV/AIDs implementation process. Women Affairs need to strengthen the DPO network and work with JONAPWD. NACA to work with FMWASD and JONAPWD to strengthen the network and organize a stakeholder's multilogue on strategies for mainstreaming disability into HIV/AIDs programming.

ONE-DAY NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION IN NIGERIA HELD AT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION MAIN AUDITORIUM,
Sequel to the ongoing National Draft Policy on Inclusive Education by the Federal Ministry of Education with support from the UK Funded Education Sector Support Programme (ESSPIN) vis-à-vis JONAPWD's epochal contributions in the development of the National Policy an off-shoot of her capacity build-up and engagement with the USAID funded Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement Programme in Nigeria, the Federal Ministry of Education organized a one-day National Dialogue on Inclusive Education. JONAPWD is making remarkable contributions to the National Policy on Inclusive Education, raised

awareness around the new Model for Accessible and Inclusive School Environment (MAISE), shared experiences from the ongoing USAID SACE State level intervention and shared IEC materials with critical stakeholders during the National Dialogue on Inclusive Education.

THE DIALOGUE ON NATIONAL SENSE CHECK OF GOVERNMENT READINESS FOR SDGs 5 & 10

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 5 and 10 aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls to ensure that there is an end to discrimination against women and girls everywhere vis-a-vis reduce inequality within and among countries respectively. It is within this purview that the Actionaid Nigeria organized a closed stakeholders meeting on inequality and the SDGs in Nigeria. This meeting tagged: The National Sense Check on Government Readiness for SDGs 5 and 10, which speaks broadly to inequality, was informed by the finding of analysis conducted on ending poverty by Actionaid International. Participants were required to map critical stakeholders that would contribute to reducing all forms or barriers and inequality in the system which deepens poverty, using the Power Mapping tool, to identify those with High Influence/Low Power, High power/ High influence, Low influence/High Power respectively. Actionaid to facilitate strategy development and programmes towards reducing all forms of inequality in the society.

STRENGTHENING ADVOCACY AND CIVIC ENGAGEMENT (SACE) – INCLUSIVE EDUCATION CLUSTER SUPPORT COACHING

Sequel to the ongoing INCLUSIVE EDUCATION project for Children with Disabilities around 3 focal states in Nigeria viz: Akwa-Ibom, Kwara and the FCT, cum efforts to better deliver on set project objectives, the SACE Team organized a two-day Cluster Support & Coaching meeting for the Inclusive Education Cluster to do a Cluster check-in on current trends on the issue of intervention, how much progress have been made, what areas more focused intervention is required, and define better strategies on what opportunities to leverage on. Focal outcome of the meeting was the development of a set of priority activities that speaks to the inclusive education intervention vis-à-vis better strengthen anchor-cluster relationship on the Project.

USAID-SACE COMPLIANCE VISIT TO THE JOINT NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (JONAPWD)

JONAPWD is implementing a 4-year advocacy project on “Inclusive Universal Basic Education around 3 locations in Nigeria: Akwa-Ibom state, Kwara state and the FCT Abuja, with the support of USAID through its Strengthening Advocacy and Citizens Engagement

(SACE) programme in Nigeria. The overall project goal is to “Improve the inclusion and access of children with disabilities to quality basic education in Nigeria through effective stakeholders’ advocacy engagement” for policy influencing, capacity building and public awareness creation.

In a bid to validate JONAPWD’s financial/accounting systems as well as review financial reports, procedural manuals in tandem with the USAID-SACE project requisites, the Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement (SACE) Finance Team visited the JONAPWD National Secretariat for a compliance review meeting. The USAID-SACE SAF Team expressed their initial worries on JONAPWD’s compliance with the USAID procedures in the implementation of her grants circle, however, they expressed vehemently their astonishment with what was discovered. All files are well in place and up to date. The SAF Team commended JONAPWD’s record management practice as well as filing systems and professed that JONAPWD is a very strategic organization because of its uniqueness especially for direct funding from USAID.

JONAPWD NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL COURTESY VISIT TO THE HONOURABLE MINISTER FOR WOMEN AFFAIRS & SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

The National Executive Council of the Joint National Association of Persons With Disabilities In Nigeria paid a courtesy visit to the Honourable Minister for Women Affairs & Social Development on August 25th, 2016. The visit was in consonance with our zest to further strategize towards the right protection of the over 25 million Persons With Disabilities in Nigeria.

It was a familiarization visit to the Minister and delegation of the JONAPWD National Executive Council Members, presentation of Update on JONAPWD’s activity report from 2014-2016, sharing updates on the CSO consultation on the Disability Bill, the urgent need for accessible accommodation for Office space. registration of all Disabled Peoples Organization and an appreciation presentation to President Muhammadu Burahi on the appointment of Dr. Samuel Ankali as Senior Special Adviser on PWD issues. In her remarks, the Honourable Minister FMWASD, Senator Aisha Alhassan, thanked the JONAPWD delegation for the visit while affirming that JONAPWD is a strong umbrella body of persons with disabilities in Nigeria. She averred the Ministry’s undaunting zest to continue to support JONAPWD. According to her, the FMWASD will do her best to reinstate JONAPWD’s yearly subvention. She further gave matching directives that the Women Centre structure should be made accessible and inclusive for all persons and this is to be reflected in the 2017 budget of the Ministry. She further entreated persons with disabilities to access the Federal Government’s 1.6 Billion Social Protection funds for Women with Disabilities vis-à-vis the over 100 billion naira Government Enterprise Empowerment Program (GEEP).

On the National Disability Bill, she affirmed been in the last (7th) Senate when it was been deliberated, however, due to non-assent by the President, the bill didn't sail through. She affirmed optimism that this time around it will not go back. She however entreated that there is need for more advocacy to critical stakeholders to ensure that the bill is assented to by the President.

In her closing remarks, she entreated the National Excos to feel free to contact the Ministry at any time for support. According to her "it is our work to support you to be integrated into society appropriately, it is against the law of God to discriminate against you".

COURTESY VISIT BY THE SENIOR SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI ON DISABILITY MATTERS TO THE JONAPWD NATIONAL SECRETARIAT

The Senior Special Assistant to the President on Disability Matters, Dr. Samuel Ankeli, and his entourage, paid a courtesy visit to the Joint National Association of Persons With Disabilities (JONAPWD) National Secretariat on August 26th, 2016. The visit was in consonance with our zest to further synergize towards the right protection of the over 25 million Persons With Disabilities in Nigeria. In his remarks, Dr. Ankeli, commended JONAPWD National President for her commitments to the integration of Persons with Disabilities in Nigeria. According to him, he said the visit was a family meeting to share certain things and challenges as President Muhammadu Buhari is bent on ensuring that persons with disabilities are well integrated within all governance structures. "we need to work together to create inclusive governance for an inclusive society".

While giving a situation analysis of the Disability community relationship with the office of the SSA on disability matters, he noted as follows; that President Muhammadu Buhari sees PWDs as abled and highly talented persons with apologies of the erroneous beliefs of the past, the President directed that disabilities be mainstreamed into all MDAs of Nigeria (minimum of 3 maximum of 5) in term of employment and creation of access and inclusivity. Enforcement on this has started. Ministry of Works have been written to ensure easy access to MDA structures, there is a new principle in government now that 10% be reserved for qualified PWDs recruitments in employment at the Federal MDAs. The establishment of a Disability Commission is utmost priority for the Office of the SSAP on Disability Matter. The SSAP concluded by affirming that the visit was a formalization of the working relationship between the office of the SSAP and JONAPWD. He implored that the communication should be opened, so that the public perceptions about Persons with Disabilities can completely be changed. In her closing remarks, the JONAPWD National President entreated the SSAP to connect JONAPWD with organizations to make the National Secretariat a Technical Information Hub

(TIH) for the Office of the SSAP on Disability Matters. Also to support the proposed African Regional Summit of the Disabled Peoples International (DPI) bidded to hold next year. She affirmed that the visit is the beginning of a good thing to come for the Disability Community. While promising to mobilize the Disability Community, she affirmed JONAPWD's willingness to partner with the Office of the SSAP on Disability Matters towards the rights protection and integration of the over 25 Million Persons with Disabilities in Nigeria

CSO'S/ MEDIA CLUSTER MEETING ON BUHARIMETER ORGANISED BY CENTRE FOR DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT (CDD) IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OSIWA AND DFID

Sequel to the E-invitation by the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) a Non-Governmental Organization on the Buharimeter Project a cluster meeting of CSO's/ Media was held on the 7th September, 2016. The overall goal of the meeting is to brainstorm on the current economic crisis vis-à-vis government policies to effect changes and propose practical strategies for civil society and the media actors to engage the government for economic revival. The Buharimeter is a project by the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD), which seeks to holds the government accountable to its promises. JONAPWD's participation was another pedestal to engage the CSO community on the course of persons with disabilities in Nigeria.

IPAS SENSITIZATION MEETING

IPAS with support from the Australian Government and Australian Aid organized a sensitization meeting on 'Increase Access to Health Information and Services for Deaf Women' which held on the 8th September, 2016 at Ibeto Hotel, Gudu District, Abuja. The meeting had in attendance representative from Australian High Commission, JONAPWD, representative of AIG Alkali Baba Usman, AIG Zone 7, NGOs, MDs of General Hospitals, Medical practitioners and support staffs, FIDA, Members of DWAN, the media, sign language interpreters and other stakeholders. The project successfully kicked off with the deployment of sign language interpreters to 8 pilot health facilities (7 public, 1 private) within the FCT on Monday, 29th August, 2016. The selected health facilities are:

- | | | | | |
|-------|------------|----------|---------------------|------------|
| i. | University | of | Abuja, | Gwagwalada |
| ii. | Kuje | | General | Hospital |
| iii. | Nyanya | | General | Hospital |
| iv. | Bwari | | General | Hospital |
| v. | Kubwa | | General | Hospital |
| vi. | Maitama | District | General | Hospital |
| vii. | Wuse | | General | Hospital |
| viii. | Lafiya | Kyari | Clinic & Maternity, | Maraba |

The objective of the intervention is to increase the capacity of sign language interpretation to provide accurate, right-based information on reproductive health and the beneficiaries of the intervention include the deaf women in the FCT seeking reproductive health, sign language interpreter and health provider to better understand and address the special needs of their clients. According to him, the sign language interpreter will provide translation, work on call-basis and collaborate with health providers to provide specific services. He concluded that the project will reduce one of the major barriers to health care access to information for deaf women.

FORMAL LAUNCH OF THE NATIONAL RE-ORIENTATION CAMPAIGN

Nigeria has had her footprints in the sands of time. The 1914 Amalgamation, her Independence in 1960 amongst others, so will September 8th 2016 make its history in Nigeria, as the Nation begins a new journey of National Re-orientation. The present Nigeria Administration rode into office on the back of the Change Mantra. One of the cardinal objectives of the Administration of His Excellency, President Muhammadu Buhari, GCFR is to tackle corruption, re-orientate Nigerians and place the nation on the path of accelerated growth and development. In an effort to translate these objectives into action, the Federal Ministry of Information and Culture called for the formal launch of the National Re-orientation Campaign, tagged "Change Begins with Me", which is one of the most important issues for the Administration as well as the nation at large. The highpoint of the Launch was the Official introduction of multimedia Campaign materials by the Honourable Minister of Information and Culture, Alh. Lai Mohammed and the presentation of live rendition of the Campaign jingle. JONAPWD participation at the event was in tandem with her zest to continually support government policies and programmes which positively impacts the generality of the populace particularly persons with disabilities in Nigeria.

BEYOND THE CONFINES EVENT

I Go Dey Laff Entertainment in conjunction with the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) and Eventsfeel Communications Ltd. flagged off the event tagged "Beyond the Confines" which held on Sunday, 16th October, 2016 by 4:00pm at Arts and Culture, Area 10, Abuja.

The event which has kick-started in the FCT-Abuja is expected to hit all parts of the country soon, with the overall aim to harness the potentials and skills of Persons with Disabilities and also to create a strong confidence and self-esteem of this sect. JONAPWD is committed to creating opportunities for PWDs to showcase their abilities and talents while also promoting inclusive development for PWDs in all aspect of lives.

COMMEMORATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, PRESS CONFERENCE AND MARKET PLACE EXHIBITION

The 2016 international day for Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) with the theme: Achieving 17 Goals for the Future We Want, which draws attention to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and how these goals can create a more inclusive and equitable world for persons with disabilities. The annual theme provides a framework for considering how persons with disability are excluded from society by promoting the removal of all types of barriers; including those relating to the physical environment, information and communications technology (ICT), or attitudinal barriers. This has been occurring since 1992 when the General Assembly proclaimed 3 December as the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

In commemoration of the International day of Persons with Disabilities, JONAPWD held a press conference and market place exhibition on the inclusive education project. The IDPD commemoration had in attendance over 500 participants from the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, including the Honourable Minister of Women Affairs. Alh Alhassan Jumai, stakeholders from the Disability Community, the JONAPWD National President, Ms. Ekaete Umoh; Senior Special Assistant to the President on Disability Matters, Dr. Samuel Ankeli; Director Rehabilitation Department of the FMWASD, MTN Foundation, Kaduna State Commissioner for Health, JONAPWD FCT Chair, Sulayman Ujah, the media (AIT, NTA, Channels, STV, LTV, Core TV, Galaxy TV, Radio Nigeria, Vision FM, National Mirror, Daily trust and Leadership newspaper); JONAPWD Cluster members, JONAPWD secretariat staff members; sign language interpreters, among others.

JONAPWD leveraged on IDPD Commemoration to raise awareness on issues of Inclusive education and the need for the urgent harmonization and accent to the Nigeria Disability Bill. During his goodwill message, the Senior Special Assistant to the President on Disability Matters, Samuel Ankeli, disclosed that disability issues have been given utmost priority by President Buhari as well he affirmed that the present administration is committed to signing into law the disability bill that is presently before the National Assembly.

JONAPWD STAFF RETREAT

As part of efforts to better position JONAPWD as a veritable institutional hub for all Disabled Peoples Organizations in Nigeria and in consonance with her zest towards the rights protection and integration of the over 25 million persons with disabilities in Nigeria, JONAPWD National Secretariat held a retreat on the 17th Day of December 2016. The retreat was another pedestal to reappraise her activities for the 2016 calendar year in a view to strategizing for the 2017 for better delivery on organizational set goals. In her remarks, the National President, thanked all staff members for their resilience and

commitments to deliver on set objectives. She averred that year 2017 is promising as we look forward to a very productive year.

Conclusion:

The task of making JONAPWD a truly development-oriented disability-rights and advocacy organization has no doubt been very daunting especially in the face of very limited human, material and financial resources as well as a generally dysfunctional institutional and organizational governance structure. Our challenge in managing the affairs of the Nigerian disability community is further stretched by the largely discriminatory and exclusive nature of the Nigerian society, the very low level of awareness and capacity on disability issues and the abject poverty which pervades the disability community.

Our hope for progress and change is however heightened by the latest show of unison which this current administration has been able to foster among prominent leaders in the Nigerian disability community especially over our quest to secure the enactment of the National Disability Law within the shortest possible time. We are also strengthened by the reasonable increase we have been able to achieve in the level of public awareness on disability issues on the part of government and other stakeholders. We are optimistic that in 2017, we shall build strongly on these achievements; ensuring that not only is the National Disability Law enacted, but also that JONAPWD is better positioned to support other DPOs to promote and protect the rights and inclusion for all PWDs in Nigeria.

We are however implored to continually contribute our quota distinctively to the advancement of the course of persons with disabilities in Nigeria, despite constraints. Our priority steps for 2017 shall include that;

- Continuity and progress on all on-going projects: Advocacy for the Enactment of the Nigerians with Disabilities Law; Advocacy for Inclusive and Accessible Basic Education for Children with Disabilities; Advocacy for Inclusive and Accessible Electoral Process for Persons with Disabilities; and Implementation of the CBN Financial Inclusion Policy and MSMEs Development Fund for PWDs.
- JONAPWD urgently requires an accessible office space which is to be outsourced by January 2017.
- There would be State based Support Visit by the National President and her Team in 2017.
- There shall be State level capacity building for Stakeholders in the Disability Community come 2017 i.e. Train a pool of State based advocates that would serve as State level Think-tanks.
- The JONAPWD Stakeholders Congress will come up by June 2017.
- A JONAPWD Constitution Review Committee is to be set up basically to review the JONAPWD Constitution before the Congress.

- JONAPWD National Secretariat to coordinate the production of ID cards for all registered Persons with Disabilities in Nigeria.

Long Live JONAPWD

Long Live FMWASD

Long Live the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Greetings to All.

Ekaete Judith Umoh

National President

JONAPWD