

FACTSHEET

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF FEDERAL AND STATE MINISTRIES OF EDUCATION

According to UNICEF, about 95% of children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school and 90% of them may never gain access to basic education in their lifetime. In actual terms, UNESCO report indicates that there are over 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria. It will not be out of place to estimate that 5 to 7 million of them are children with disabilities. This projection is in line with World Bank and WHO projections that persons with disabilities constitute about 15% of populations in developing countries and that between 80 to 90% of them don't gain access to basic needs of life especially basic education. The primary underlying causes of this situation are the exclusive and inaccessible nature, structure and system of virtually all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; the confinement of the education of children with disabilities to very few, poorly staffed, poorly equipped and outdated special schools; very low public awareness on issues of inclusive education; inadequate institutional and human capacities required to implement inclusive education; and inadequate, poor implementation or non-availability of appropriate legal and policy frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

Nigeria has signed and ratified the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 24 of which provides that all schools must be inclusive of, and accessible to all children including those with disabilities. Nigeria has equally signed-up to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Goal 4 of which targets that by 2030, all school-age children including those with disabilities must have access to qualitative, functional and effective basic education. The National Policy on Education provides that education must be inclusive and that all children including those with disabilities have the right to qualitative, functional and effective basic education. The Universal Basic Education Act of 2004 provides that basic education is free and compulsory for all school-age children.

Even if enough schools were to be provided to accommodate all children in Nigeria, children with disabilities would still be excluded if those schools are not designed, constructed, equipped, staffed, administered and managed in a disability-inclusive and physically accessible manner. Inclusive education is the global best educational practice and standard to ensure that no child is out of school irrespective of their disabilities, gender and other social status.

Inclusive education is the best way for proper and judicious use of scarce educational human, material and financial resources; ensuring that such resources are properly deployed to give all children equal access to qualitative functional and effective education where they learn, play and grow together in same classes and school environment.

Special schools have been found to be socially dysfunctional and irrelevant to the total well being of persons with disabilities as they help reinforce negative social practices such as

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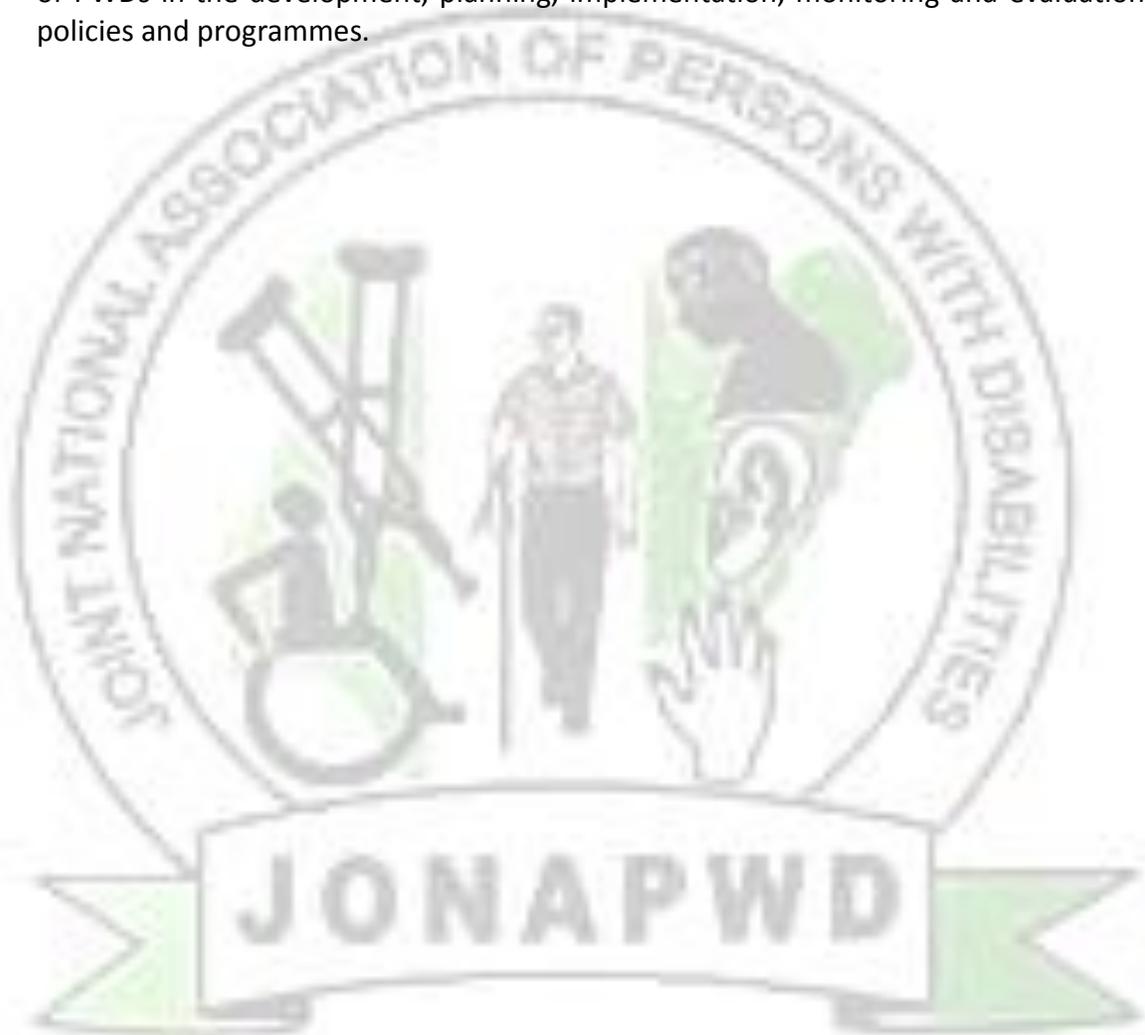
Within an inclusive education system, special schools can only serve the purpose of a Resource Centre to support children with severe/multiple disabilities ; provide capacity-building and training to regular teachers, special educators, care-givers, medical practitioners, etc; and support design and development of special/adaptive instructional materials.

The Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) is implementing a 4-year advocacy project on inclusive basic education for children with disabilities in FCT Abuja, Akwa-Ibom state and Kwara state respectively with support from USAID through its Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement (SACE) project in Nigeria. To commence the project activities, a comprehensive Baseline Survey was conducted to assess the situation and gather evidence for further engagement. Based on findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Federal and state Ministries of education should improve on their policy-making, capacity-building, institutional development, infrastructural development, and advocacy activities to promote inclusive basic education and increase educational access for children with disabilities in Nigeria.
- The ministries should develop or review relevant policy(s) on inclusive education; create relevant Departments or Agencies to oversee implementation of the policy; and develop strategic implementation plans in line with overall National and/or State Development Plans and finance/budget plans.
- The Ministries should make proposals to federal and state governments for the increase in annual budgets for inclusive education while also facilitating the inauguration of Special Fund for the implementation of inclusive education. This Fund should set a broad target to make all schools inclusive of and accessible to all children including children with disabilities in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and the UNCRPD respectively.
- The Federal and State Ministries of Education should develop and strengthen partnerships and collaborations with DPOs, CSOs, CBOs, FBOs, parent's forum, traditional rulers, Parents Forum, etc and encourage them to play active roles in supporting inclusive education. These groups may be empowered by the Ministry of education to play observational, resource mobilization, monitoring and security roles.
- The Federal and State Ministries of Education should increase public enlightenment campaigns to sensitize the public on the need for and importance of inclusive education as well as the roles and responsibilities of the citizens in making inclusive education a reality.
- Federal and State Ministries of Education should collaborate with tertiary educational institutions for the purpose of effective mobilization of human resources required for the implementation of inclusive education. This collaboration should also include resource mobilization by the federal and state ministries to fund institutional, technical and infrastructural capacities of tertiary educational institutions for the purpose of

empowering them to provide academic and professional programmes on inclusive education.

- Federal and State Ministries of Education or the National and State Scholarship Boards should establish Special undergraduate and postgraduate Scholarship/Grant to encourage qualified and interested students to take up courses in special and inclusive education.
- Federal and State Ministries should appoint and/or employ qualified PWDs as member of Governing Boards and/or staff in order to effectively represent the voice and interest of PWDs in the development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes.



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INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION COMMISSION (UBEC), STATE UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION BOARD (SUBEB) AND THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION AUTHORITY (LGEA)

According to UNICEF, about 95% of children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school and 90% of them may never gain access to basic education in their lifetime. In actual terms, UNESCO report indicates that there are over 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria. It will not be out of place to estimate that 5 to 7 million of them are children with disabilities. This projection is in line with World Bank and WHO projections that persons with disabilities constitute about 15% of populations in developing countries and that between 80 to 90% of them don't gain access to basic needs of life especially basic education. The primary underlying causes of this situation are the exclusive and inaccessible nature, structure and system of virtually all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; the confinement of the education of children with disabilities to very few, poorly staffed, poorly equipped and outdated special schools; very low public awareness on issues of inclusive education; inadequate institutional and human capacities required to implement inclusive education; and inadequate, poor implementation or non-availability of appropriate legal and policy frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

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Special schools have been found to be socially dysfunctional and irrelevant to the total well being of persons with disabilities as they help reinforce negative social practices such as

discrimination, segregation, low self-esteem and denial of the fundamental rights of children with disabilities.

Within an inclusive education system, special schools can only serve the purpose of a Resource Centre to support children with severe/multiple disabilities ; provide capacity-building and training to regular teachers, special educators, care-givers, medical practitioners, etc; and support design and development of special/adaptive instructional materials.

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- The Universal Basic Education Commission should mobilize other stakeholders including the Presidency and the National Assembly to support the review of the UBE Act of 2004 to ensure that it is adequately inclusive of the objectives, strategies, funding and implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria.
- UBEC, SUBEB and the LGEA should effectively collaborate with the Federal and State Ministries of Education in the areas of policy development, capacity-building, institutional development, infrastructural development, and advocacy activities that will effectively support implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria.
- UBEC, SUBEB and the LGEA should develop and strengthen partnerships and collaborations with DPOs, CSOs, CBOs, FBOs, parent's forum, traditional rulers, Parents Forum, etc and encourage them to play active roles in supporting inclusive education. These groups may be empowered to play observational, resource mobilization, monitoring and security roles.
- UBEC and its subnational and local agencies should develop strategic plans to comprehensively implement inclusive education in line with its core mandates and functions including public enlightenment.
- UBEC and its state-level agencies should appoint and/or employ qualified PWDs as member of Governing Boards and/or staff in order to effectively represent the voice and interest of PWDs in the development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes.

FACTSHEET

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (NERDC) AND SIMILAR STATE-LEVEL AGENCIES

According to UNICEF, about 95% of children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school and 90% of them may never gain access to basic education in their lifetime. In actual terms, UNESCO report indicates that there are over 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria. It will not be out of place to estimate that 5 to 7 million of them are children with disabilities. This projection is in line with World Bank and WHO projections that persons with disabilities constitute about 15% of populations in developing countries and that between 80 to 90% of them don't gain access to basic needs of life especially basic education. The primary underlying causes of this situation are the exclusive and inaccessible nature, structure and system of virtually all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; the confinement of the education of children with disabilities to very few, poorly staffed, poorly equipped and outdated special schools; very low public awareness on issues of inclusive education; inadequate institutional and human capacities required to implement inclusive education; and inadequate, poor implementation or non-availability of appropriate legal and policy frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

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- NERDC and other similar state-level agencies should collaborate with Federal and State Ministries of Education, UBEC, SUBEB and other stakeholders to review the UBE Act, develop or review inclusive education policies and develop policy implementation strategic plans.
- National and State educational research agencies should collaborate to develop a National Curriculum on Inclusive Education. An Implementation Manual for Inclusive Education should also be developed to guide the management and administration of inclusive education in public and private schools for the purpose of setting standards and maintaining uniform practice in line with existing legal and policy frameworks as well as international guidelines.
- The educational research and development agencies should embark and/or support local development of special and inclusive teaching and learning aides which can be used by special and regular teachers to teach in an inclusive classroom This will help to reduce the heavy dependence on foreign or imported instructional materials and assistive technologies which are usually very cost intensive and unaffordable.
- NERDC and state-level agencies should be given Special Research Grants to collaborate with and coordinate local and international tertiary educational institutions, research institutes, professionals, etc to conduct researches for the purpose of improving inclusive education in Nigeria.
- NERDC and other state-level agencies should establish Special undergraduate and postgraduate Scholarship/Grant to encourage qualified and interested students to take up courses in special and inclusive education.
- NERDC and similar state-level agencies should appoint and/or employ qualified PWDs as member of Governing Boards and/or staff in order to effectively represent the voice and interest of PWDs in the development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes.



FACTSHEET

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES, COLLEGES OF EDUCATION, POLYTECHNICS AND TERTIARY EDUCATION REGULATORY AGENCIES

According to UNICEF, about 95% of children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school and 90% of them may never gain access to basic education in their lifetime. In actual terms, UNESCO report indicates that there are over 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria. It will not be out of place to estimate that 5 to 7 million of them are children with disabilities. This projection is in line with World Bank and WHO projections that persons with disabilities constitute about 15% of populations in developing countries and that between 80 to 90% of them don't gain access to basic needs of life especially basic education. The primary underlying causes of this situation are the exclusive and inaccessible nature, structure and system of virtually all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; the confinement of the education of children with disabilities to very few, poorly staffed, poorly equipped and outdated special schools; very low public awareness on issues of inclusive education; inadequate institutional and human capacities required to implement inclusive education; and inadequate, poor implementation or non-availability of appropriate legal and policy frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

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- Tertiary educational institutions and their regulatory agencies should work towards reviewing the curriculum of teacher education in Nigeria to sufficiently provide for the development of manpower required for the implementation of inclusive education in Nigeria.
- Tertiary educational institutions should play active roles in the development and/or review of legal, policy and institutional frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education at national and state levels.
- Regulatory agencies and management of tertiary educational institutions should support Faculties and Colleges of education to build internal capacity to effectively develop, initiate and administer courses and programmes on inclusive education.
- Regulatory agencies of Tertiary educational institutions should support Mentorship and Partnership programmes between institutions with vast experience on inclusive education and those showing genuine interest to develop and administer similar academic courses and professional programmes.
- Faculties and colleges of education in Tertiary institutions should develop and administer Community Outreach Programmes on inclusive education to effectively develop and strengthen partnership engagement with other stakeholders including: DPOs, CSOs, CBOs, FBOs, parents forum, traditional rulers, Parents Forum, the media, the private sector, etc and encourage them to play active roles in supporting inclusive education. These groups may be enlightened on how to play advocacy, observational, resource mobilization, monitoring and security roles.
- Tertiary educational institutions and their regulatory agencies should appoint and/or employ qualified PWDs as member of Governing Boards and/or staff in order to effectively represent the voice and interest of PWDs in the development, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes.

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INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF DISABLED PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATIONS (DPOs) AND CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOs)

According to UNICEF, about 95% of children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school and 90% of them may never gain access to basic education in their lifetime. In actual terms, UNESCO report indicates that there are over 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria. It will not be out of place to estimate that 5 to 7 million of them are children with disabilities. This projection is in line with World Bank and WHO projections that persons with disabilities constitute about 15% of populations in developing countries and that between 80 to 90% of them don't gain access to basic needs of life especially basic education. The primary underlying causes of this situation are the exclusive and inaccessible nature, structure and system of virtually all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; the confinement of the education of children with disabilities to very few, poorly staffed, poorly equipped and outdated special schools; very low public awareness on issues of inclusive education; inadequate institutional and human capacities required to implement inclusive education; and inadequate, poor implementation or non-availability of appropriate legal and policy frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

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- DPOs and CSOs should build technical capacities of their members to effectively engage and participate in reform processes of legal, policy and institutional frameworks on inclusive education. These capacity-building should also aim at changing orientation of DPOs and CSOs from the charity model of disability to the rights-based and social inclusion models; as well as from being ordinary associations to becoming more organized development-oriented institutions.
- DPOs and CSOs should encourage, mobilize and leverage on the professional capacities of their members who are experts on inclusive education to lead or coordinate advocacies, researches, capacity-building and other tasks aimed at promoting inclusive education in Nigeria.
- DPOs and CSOs should develop stakeholder partnership and engagement strategies targeting MDAs, tertiary educational and research institutions, parents forum, CBOs and FBOs, the media, the private sector and development agencies for the purpose of mobilizing support and resources for the implementation of inclusive education.
- DPOs and CSOs should lead advocacies and public awareness campaigns to change public attitude towards disability issues in general and inclusive education in particular.

FACTSHEET

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF PARENTS TEACHERS ASSOCIATION/FORUM

According to UNICEF, about 95% of children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school and 90% of them may never gain access to basic education in their lifetime. In actual terms, UNESCO report indicates that there are over 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria. It will not be out of place to estimate that 5 to 7 million of them are children with disabilities. This projection is in line with World Bank and WHO projections that persons with disabilities constitute about 15% of populations in developing countries and that between 80 to 90% of them don't gain access to basic needs of life especially basic education. The primary underlying causes of this situation are the exclusive and inaccessible nature, structure and system of virtually all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; the confinement of the education of children with disabilities to very few, poorly staffed, poorly equipped and outdated special schools; very low public awareness on issues of inclusive education; inadequate institutional and human capacities required to implement inclusive education; and inadequate, poor implementation or non-availability of appropriate legal and policy frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

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- PTA/PTFs should build technical capacities of their members to effectively engage and participate in reform processes of legal, policy and institutional frameworks on inclusive education. These capacity-building should also aim at changing orientation of PTA/PTFs from the charity model of disability to the rights-based and social inclusion models; as well as from being ordinary associations to becoming more organized development-oriented institutions.
- PTA/PTFs should encourage, mobilize and leverage on the professional capacities of their members who are experts on inclusive education to lead or coordinate advocacies, researches, capacity-building and other tasks aimed at promoting inclusive education in Nigeria.
- PTA/PTFs should develop stakeholder partnership and engagement strategies targeting MDAs, tertiary educational and research institutions, DPOs, CSOs, CBOs and FBOs, the media, the private sector and development agencies for the purpose of mobilizing support and resources for the implementation of inclusive education.
- PTA/PTFs should lead advocacies and public awareness campaigns to change public attitude towards disability issues in general and inclusive education in particular.
- PTA/PTFs should develop mentorship, counseling and other relevant rehabilitation, medical and educational support services and programmes for their members who are parents of children with disabilities especially those who are illiterates and poor.
- PTAs/PTFs should establish Special undergraduate and postgraduate Scholarship/Grant to encourage qualified and interested students to take up courses in special and inclusive education.

FACTSHEET

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY-BASED AND FAITH-BASED ORGANIZATIONS (CBOs AND FBOs)

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- CBOs and FBOs should build technical capacities of their members to effectively engage and participate in reform processes of legal, policy and institutional frameworks on inclusive education. These capacity-building should also aim at changing orientation of CBOs and FBOs from the charity model of disability to the rights-based and social inclusion models; as well as build their capacities to champion advocacies for the removal of harmful socio-cultural practices and other forms of discrimination and segregation of persons with disabilities.
- CBOs and FBOs should encourage, mobilize and leverage on the professional capacities of their members who are experts on inclusive education to lead or coordinate advocacies, researches, capacity-building and other tasks aimed at promoting inclusive education in Nigeria.
- CBOs and FBOs should develop stakeholder partnership and engagement strategies targeting MDAs, tertiary educational and research institutions, DPOs, CSOs, parent's forum, the media, the private sector and development agencies for the purpose of mobilizing support and resources for the implementation of inclusive education.
- CBOs and FBOs should lead advocacies and public awareness campaigns to change public attitude towards disability issues in general and inclusive education in particular.
- CBOs and FBOs should develop community-based mentorship, counseling and other relevant rehabilitation, medical and educational support services and programmes for children and adults with disabilities especially those who are illiterates and poor.
- FBOs especially those who are currently running special schools should review and reform those special schools to become inclusive to non-disabled children, while FBOs running regular schools should make such schools inclusive of and accessible to children with disabilities.
- CBOs and FBOs should establish Special undergraduate and postgraduate Scholarship/Grant to encourage qualified and interested students to take up courses in special and inclusive education.



FACTSHEET

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

According to UNICEF, about 95% of children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school and 90% of them may never gain access to basic education in their lifetime. In actual terms, UNESCO report indicates that there are over 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria. It will not be out of place to estimate that 5 to 7 million of them are children with disabilities. This projection is in line with World Bank and WHO projections that persons with disabilities constitute about 15% of populations in developing countries and that between 80 to 90% of them don't gain access to basic needs of life especially basic education. The primary underlying causes of this situation are the exclusive and inaccessible nature, structure and system of virtually all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; the confinement of the education of children with disabilities to very few, poorly staffed, poorly equipped and outdated special schools; very low public awareness on issues of inclusive education; inadequate institutional and human capacities required to implement inclusive education; and inadequate, poor implementation or non-availability of appropriate legal and policy frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

Nigeria has signed and ratified the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 24 of which provides that all schools must be inclusive of, and accessible to all children including those with disabilities. Nigeria has equally signed-up to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Goal 4 of which targets that by 2030, all school-age children including those with disabilities must have access to qualitative, functional and effective basic education. The National Policy on Education provides that education must be inclusive and that all children including those with disabilities have the right to qualitative, functional and effective basic education. The Universal Basic Education Act of 2004 provides that basic education is free and compulsory for all school-age children.

Even if enough schools were to be provided to accommodate all children in Nigeria, children with disabilities would still be excluded if those schools are not designed, constructed, equipped, staffed, administered and managed in a disability-inclusive and physically accessible manner. Inclusive education is the global best educational practice and standard to ensure that no child is out of school irrespective of their disabilities, gender and other social status.

Inclusive education is the best way for proper and judicious use of scarce educational human, material and financial resources; ensuring that such resources are properly deployed to give all children equal access to qualitative functional and effective education where they learn, play and grow together in same classes and school environment.

Special schools have been found to be socially dysfunctional and irrelevant to the total well being of persons with disabilities as they help reinforce negative social practices such as

discrimination, segregation, low self-esteem and denial of the fundamental rights of children with disabilities.

Within an inclusive education system, special schools can only serve the purpose of a Resource Centre to support children with severe/multiple disabilities ; provide capacity-building and training to regular teachers, special educators, care-givers, medical practitioners, etc; and support design and development of special/adaptive instructional materials;

The Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) is implementing a 4-year advocacy project on inclusive basic education for children with disabilities in FCT Abuja, Akwa-Ibom state and Kwara state respectively with support from USAID through its Strengthening Advocacy and Civic Engagement (SACE) programme in Nigeria. To commence the project activities, a comprehensive Baseline Survey was conducted to assess the situation and gather evidence for further engagement. Based on findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Most of the Multinationals and large business corporations devote significant budgets to Corporate Social Initiatives and also run charity Foundations. These business entities need to review their CSI policies and programmes and build technical and institutional capacity of such and other relevant Departments to effectively mainstream the promotion of rights and social inclusion for persons with disabilities in general and the development of inclusive education in particular.
- CSI Departments and charity Foundations of corporate business organizations should develop stakeholder partnership and engagement strategies on social inclusion and inclusive education targeting MDAs, tertiary educational and research institutions, DPOs, CSOs, parents forum, CBOs and FBOs, the media, the private sector and development agencies for the purpose of mobilizing support and resources for the implementation of inclusive education.
- CSI Departments and charity Foundations of corporate business organizations should establish Special undergraduate and postgraduate Scholarship/Grant to encourage qualified and interested students to take up courses in special and inclusive education.
- The Commercial/Marketing/Public Affairs Sections/Departments of corporate business organizations should sponsor public awareness advertorials to promote positive attitudes towards PWDs and to inform the public on the benefits of inclusive education.

FACTSHEET

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

According to UNICEF, about 95% of children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school and 90% of them may never gain access to basic education in their lifetime. In actual terms, UNESCO report indicates that there are over 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria. It will not be out of place to estimate that 5 to 7 million of them are children with disabilities. This projection is in line with World Bank and WHO projections that persons with disabilities constitute about 15% of populations in developing countries and that between 80 to 90% of them don't gain access to basic needs of life especially basic education. The primary underlying causes of this situation are the exclusive and inaccessible nature, structure and system of virtually all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; the confinement of the education of children with disabilities to very few, poorly staffed, poorly equipped and outdated special schools; very low public awareness on issues of inclusive education; inadequate institutional and human capacities required to implement inclusive education; and inadequate, poor implementation or non-availability of appropriate legal and policy frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

Nigeria has signed and ratified the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Article 24 of which provides that all schools must be inclusive of, and accessible to all children including those with disabilities. Nigeria has equally signed-up to the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Goal 4 of which targets that by 2030, all school-age children including those with disabilities must have access to qualitative, functional and effective basic education. The National Policy on Education provides that education must be inclusive and that all children including those with disabilities have the right to qualitative, functional and effective basic education. The Universal Basic Education Act of 2004 provides that basic education is free and compulsory for all school-age children.

Even if enough schools were to be provided to accommodate all children in Nigeria, children with disabilities would still be excluded if those schools are not designed, constructed, equipped, staffed, administered and managed in a disability-inclusive and physically accessible manner. Inclusive education is the global best educational practice and standard to ensure that no child is out of school irrespective of their disabilities, gender and other social status.

Inclusive education is the best way for proper and judicious use of scarce educational human, material and financial resources; ensuring that such resources are properly deployed to give all children equal access to qualitative functional and effective education where they learn, play and grow together in same classes and school environment.

Special schools have been found to be socially dysfunctional and irrelevant to the total well being of persons with disabilities as they help reinforce negative social practices such as

discrimination, segregation, low self-esteem and denial of the fundamental rights of children with disabilities.

Within an inclusive education system, special schools can only serve the purpose of a Resource Centre to support children with severe/multiple disabilities ; provide capacity-building and training to regular teachers, special educators, care-givers, medical practitioners, etc; and support design and development of special/adaptive instructional materials;

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- Local and international development agencies, especially those supporting education as one of their thematic/programmatic areas should do a review of such policies and programmes to effectively make provisions for supporting social inclusion of PWDs and inclusive education in Nigeria.
- Development agencies should support the review and development of legal, policy and institutional frameworks required for the proper implementation of inclusive education and other issues of disability-based rights and social inclusion in Nigeria.
- Development agencies should support community-based mentorship, counseling and other relevant rehabilitation, medical and educational support services and programmes for children and adults with disabilities especially those who are illiterates and poor.
- Development Agencies should establish Special undergraduate and postgraduate Scholarship/Grant to encourage qualified and interested students to take up courses in special and inclusive education.
- Local and international development agencies should establish Special Grants to support research and development work/studies on special and inclusive education
- Local and international development agencies should develop stakeholder partnership and engagement strategies targeting MDAs, tertiary educational and research institutions, DPOs, CSOs, parent's forum, the media, the private sector and development agencies for the purpose of mobilizing support and resources for the implementation of inclusive education.
- Beyond the conduct of advocacies, local and international development partners should also provide support:
 - To improve capacity-building and human resource development required for inclusive education;
 - to develop and strengthen institutional and technical capacities of MDAs, tertiary educational and research institutions, DPOs, CSOs, parents forum, CBOs, FBOs, the media, etc;

- to develop infrastructure and facilities required to effectively administer inclusive education;
- To increase public awareness for the purpose of changing negative attitudes towards PWDs.



FACTSHEET

INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES IN NIGERIA: THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA

According to UNICEF, about 95% of children with disabilities in developing countries are out of school and 90% of them may never gain access to basic education in their lifetime. In actual terms, UNESCO report indicates that there are over 10.5 million out of school children in Nigeria. It will not be out of place to estimate that 5 to 7 million of them are children with disabilities. This projection is in line with World Bank and WHO projections that persons with disabilities constitute about 15% of populations in developing countries and that between 80 to 90% of them don't gain access to basic needs of life especially basic education. The primary underlying causes of this situation are the exclusive and inaccessible nature, structure and system of virtually all primary and secondary schools in Nigeria; the confinement of the education of children with disabilities to very few, poorly staffed, poorly equipped and outdated special schools; very low public awareness on issues of inclusive education; inadequate institutional and human capacities required to implement inclusive education; and inadequate, poor implementation or non-availability of appropriate legal and policy frameworks required for the implementation of inclusive education for children with disabilities.

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Inclusive education is the best way for proper and judicious use of scarce educational human, material and financial resources; ensuring that such resources are properly deployed to give all children equal access to qualitative functional and effective education where they learn, play and grow together in same classes and school environment.

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- Media organizations should support capacity-building for their staff reporters, presenters and producers on issues of disability rights and social inclusion especially inclusive education. Specifically, education Correspondents should be adequately trained on how to report inclusive education and the use of appropriate disability terms and concepts.
- Media organizations should rethink their educational programmes, features, documentaries, articles, news, etc to effectively mainstream issues of inclusive education.
- Media organizations should use their platforms to support and promote stakeholder partnership and engagement strategies targeting MDAs, tertiary educational and research institutions, DPOs, CSOs, parent's forum, the media, the private sector and development agencies for the purpose of mobilizing support and resources for the implementation of inclusive education.
- Media organizations should, by way of Corporate Social Initiative, deploy their media platforms to increase public awareness on social inclusion and inclusive education through public enlightenment advertorials, messages, bye-lines, etc.