**PRESS RELEASE**

UNIVERSAL BASIC EDUCATION (UBE) N77, 110, 000 2016 BUDGET ALLOCATION; JONAPWD SEEKS PRESIDENT MUHAMMADU BUHARI's SUPPORT ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 asserts that everyone has the right to education. Over 67 years later, it is clear that many people are still being denied this basic human right; worst hit has been children with disabilities many of whom have being subjected to unrestrained ignominy. The Universal Basic Education Act, 2004 does not make specific provisions for the inclusion of children with disabilities in both the Early Child School and the 9-year basic education programmes respectively. This account for why children with disabilities are not put into consideration in the implementation of the UBE Act in an inclusive manner,

The Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWDs), as an umbrella organization for all disability organizations in Nigeria, commends President Muhammadu Buhari (PMB) on the N 77, 110, 000, 000 allocation to **Universal Basic Education in the 2016 Budget,** this is indicative of the administration's policy direction to eradicating all forms of illiteracy in the country for human capacity development towards economic growth. However JONAPWD is worried that the UBE budget line may again be expended in a manner that excludes Children with disabilities from benefiting despite its past funding practice of targeting special schools which is no longer working as it should, thus, the need to make inclusive plans for Persons With Disabilities in lieu of current exclusion practice of targets on special schools which has been overstretched by the number of children with disabilities daily being sent such facility.

JONAPWD with support from USAID is implementing the 'Inclusive Basic Education for Children with Disabilities in Nigeria' project; a project designed to improve Access to Quality Basic Education for people with disabilities in an inclusive setting, specifically targeting policies, accountability and transparency gaps in the implementation of Universal Basic Education in Nigeria, thus, consciously tracking budget allocation and engaging with stakeholders, for the implementation of the UBE budget in an inclusive manner that provides for free, Universal Basic Education for every Nigerian child of school­ going age.

JONAPWD proposes that the UBE should, in 2016 consider providing support to states to remodel and rehabilitate regular public primary and secondary schools such that they become inclusive of and accessible to children with disabilities. Each state and the FCT may be supported to pilot at least 3 primary and 3 junior secondary schools for a start. Thus, a clear budget line be allocated for this purpose to assuage the challenges of inadequate infrastructural, technological, institutional and human capacities required to enhance inclusive education and access for children with disability.

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