



Strategic Roadmap for Inclusive Access to Quality Higher Education in Nigeria

2024-2028

**Proposed by the
JAMB Equal Opportunity Group**

September 2023

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2023. Published by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board
Bwari, Abuja



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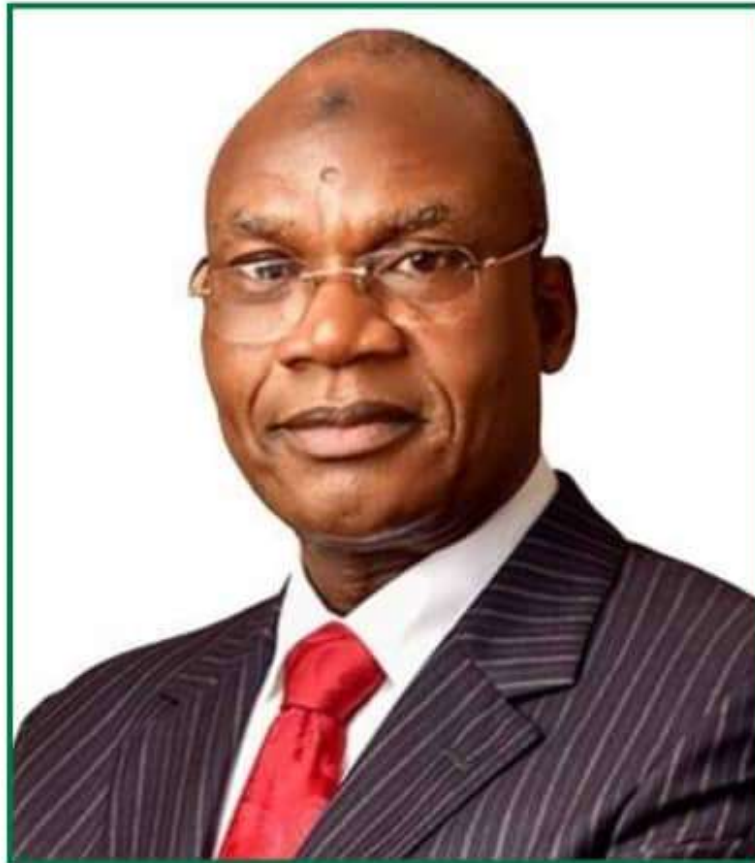
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Executive Summary

Nigeria’s higher education system, with over 1,000 institutions and enrolling about 2.8 million students is the most expansive in Africa. By 2050, a doubling of enrolment is envisaged, a leap that will be driven by the quantum jump in population from the current estimate of 213 million to 400 million in 2050. Beyond this quantitative expansion, the desire to elevate quality, relevance, equity, efficiency and effectiveness has been propelled with greater energy in the last two decades. The quest to meet the demands of the different ministerial strategic plans and attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially goal No. 4 has been key drivers. Before the middle of the fourth quarter of 2023, stakeholders expect the Ministerial Roadmap for Education by Professor Tahir Mammen to be unveiled, adding fresh impetus to the quest to improve the education delivery system. Over the years, while attention has turned to quality improvements especially by the regulatory agencies- National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and national Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), relatively feeble concern is placed on equity especially on the broader issue of inclusive education at the higher education level. This is a glaring weak spot in Nigeria’s education architecture.

Not until about 2017, data on inclusive education in Nigeria’s higher education system especially in the segment of access was sparse. It was in 2017 that Professor Is-haq Oloyede as Registrar/Chief Executive of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board set up the JAMB Equal Opportunity Group (JEOG) to administer the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) to blind candidates and others who could not be served in regular testing centres. The expanded mandate of JEOG was to track its catchment of candidates from admission to graduation and research ways of improving the delivery of inclusive education. It was also in 2017 that Professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed as Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission instituted a much-improved documentation of the “*State of University Education in Nigeria*” embodying statistics from all universities in Nigeria relating to admission and provision of facilities for delivering quality university education. The metrics up to 2021, though incomplete, are poised to grow from 2023.

For the metrics of inclusive tertiary education to grow, JEOG proposed to JAMB management the developed of a 5-year strategic roadmap. Following approval, the draft of the roadmap was initiated based on the following nine strategic goals.

Policy

1. By 2024, establish national standards and guidelines for inclusive and equitable basic and higher education and mechanism for their quality assurance.
2. By 2025 establish and periodically update a national database of Nigerians who are eligible for inclusion in the inclusive system.

Access

3. From 2024, at least 5% annual increase in admission through JAMB, of candidates with special needs would be recorded in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
4. From 2024, a trimodal system of UTME administration based on the preference of candidates involving (a) fully Braille; (b) fully CBT; and (c) fully read-aloud by proctor to be implemented by JEOG with a 5% annual increase to the fully-CBT mode, leading up to 2028.
5. From 2024, the conduct of UTME should increase by an annual growth rate of 2% of the population of candidates with other forms of disabilities other than visual handicap such as autism, Down Syndrome, hard of hearing and muteness that apply for and are eligible for admission to tertiary institutions.
6. Opportunities for blind/visually-impaired candidates and others with disabilities to receive quality basic education should be expanded by a factor of 1% of current status, every year from 2024 over the next ten years.

Process

7. From 2024, the number of universities, polytechnics and colleges of education with ambient environment including minimum facilities and human resources for delivering quality higher education to persons with disabilities should increase annually by 10%.
8. By 2028, at least 60% of students with disabilities attending higher education institutions in Nigeria should report receiving non-discriminatory attention in class, hostels and other places on campus.

Product

9. By 2028, Nigeria should be ranked among the top five in Africa and top 20 countries in the world for successful implementation of inclusive education.

This roadmap presents the implementation strategies for each of the goals and estimates the sum of NXXX for achieving the targets. It is anticipated that funding to cover the cost of implementation will be drawn from federal and state governments as well as from the private sector and development partners.

Abbreviations

Acronym	Expansion
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
BUK	Bayero University Kano
DLI	Distance Learning Institute
FME	Federal Ministry of Education
JAMB	Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board
JEOG	JAMB Equal Opportunity Group
NECO	National Examinations Council
NOUN	National Open University of Nigeria
NTA	Nigerian Television Authority
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UTME	Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination
WAEC	West African Examinations Council

Brief History of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB)

Before the establishment of JAMB as a central admissions body, tertiary institutions in Nigeria especially universities directly admitted candidates from the pool of applicants they individually attracted. What was required for a candidate to gain a university admission was Credit Passes in relevant subjects and the Advanced Level of General Certificate of Education (GCE A/L). Institutions would select candidates that had met their criteria and such candidates would be contacted to commence study.

Till the early 70s, only six universities existed in Nigeria. Applicants approached desired institutions and their qualifications were ascertained. Through this process, a candidate would apply to many universities and he could be admitted by all of them if qualified, leaving shortages and wastages of admission slots. Besides, there were numerous complaints that majority of universities drew the bulk of their students from their immediate geographical or catchment areas, thereby undermining national integration on the one hand, the essence of university as a global or universal confluence of diverse people and ideas on the other.

Concerned about this development and its negative implications for national development, the Committee of Vice-Chancellors in 1974 birthed the idea of having a central admission process that would cater for all the universities while addressing the challenges and avoiding the duplications.

The Committee of Vice-Chancellors set up a panel which included two experts, Mr. L. R. Kay, Secretary, Universities Central Council on Admissions of the United Kingdom and Mr. H. W. Pettipierre, Director of the Ontario Universities Application Centre of the Province of Ontario, Ontario, Canada. The Committee recommended the establishment of two bodies: (a). Matriculation Board; and (b). Central Admissions Board. In response to this submission by the universities, the Federal Military Government constituted a National Committee on University Entrance Examinations under the chairmanship of Mr M. S. Angulu. The Committee recommended the establishment of a centralised examination system for all prospective students of the nation's tertiary institutions. Subsequently, the Federal Government decided to merge the two Boards into one, called Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board.

Two years later, the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) was established by Decree No. 2 of 1978, which was amended by Decree No. 33 of 1989 and further amended by Decree No. 4 of 1993. The later amendment expanded the scope of JAMB's operations and empowered it to conduct relevant examinations and admission in collaboration with tertiary institutions in such a way that all applicants would be equitably treated in admission to any tertiary institution.

Functions of JAMB

The functions of JAMB as stated in the enabling law are to:

- A. conduct Matriculation Examination for entry into all Universities, Polytechnics and Colleges of Education (by whatever name called) in Nigeria;

- B. appoint Examiners, Moderators, Invigilators, members of the Subject Panels and committees and other persons with respect to matriculation examinations and any other matters incidental thereto or connected therewith;
- C. place suitably qualified candidates in the tertiary institutions after having considered:
 - i. the vacancies available in each tertiary institution;
 - ii. the guidelines approved for each tertiary institution by its proprietors or other competent authorities;
 - iii. the preference expressed or otherwise indicated by the candidates for certain tertiary institutions and courses; and
 - iv. such other matters as the Board may be directed by the Honourable Minister to consider or the Board itself may consider appropriate in the circumstances;
- D. collate and disseminate information on all matters relating to admissions into tertiary institutions or any other matter relevant to the discharge of functions of the Board;
- E. carry out other activities as are necessary or expedient for the full discharge of all or any of the functions conferred on it under or pursuant to this Decree and;

Subsequently, JAMB ensures that admissions into the tertiary institutions in Nigeria, is in conformity with the extant rules guiding the process. The major goals of admission by the Board are to:

- i. ensure that admission guidelines are strictly adhered to, in order to reflect federal character. The Federal Government stipulates that 40% of candidates are to be selected on merit, 30% from the locality which, in most cases, is the geographical or socio-cultural area contiguous to the institution. 20% is reserved for candidates from the educationally less developed states (ELDS). Each institution is given 10% discretionary admission to determine who should use the slot. Universities are also expected to reserve 2.5% from the 10% for applicants from foreign countries. The discretionary provision was later cancelled making admission guidelines for federal universities to be based on the criteria of merit (45%), locality (catchment 35%) and ELDS (20%), with the exception of University of Ibadan and University of Abuja which both have a national catchment;
- ii. determine and compare the number of candidates admitted through the regular and the number admitted through part-time programmes; and
- iii. figure out the extent to which the Board has impacted on admission into tertiary institutions.

There is also a policy of the Federal Government regarding admission ratio. This is aimed at encouraging Science and Technology to fast-track the nation's techno-scientific development. While universities are to reflect Science/ Humanities ratio of 60:40, Polytechnics are to reflect 70:30 Technology/Non-technology ratio.

As an agency of the Federal Ministry of Education, JAMB over the years has creditably performed the functions of placing qualified candidates in relevant academic programmes across various higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. The significance of the Board to the development of education cannot be over-emphasised as every student of higher education in Nigeria at one time or another was a candidate of JAMB. Within its powers, JAMB has fulfilled the higher education aspirations of millions of Nigerians, including current and past leaders of various strata of the Nigerian socio-political life, through the deployment of appropriate human and material resources.

The Steps in JAMB's Process Chain

The process chain begins with the payment for the application documents and registration of candidates. This is followed by the conduct of the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME). The results of the examination are then used, together with other

qualifying criteria, to admit candidates to tertiary institutions across the country, based on the number of spaces available in each institution and the choices of the candidates.

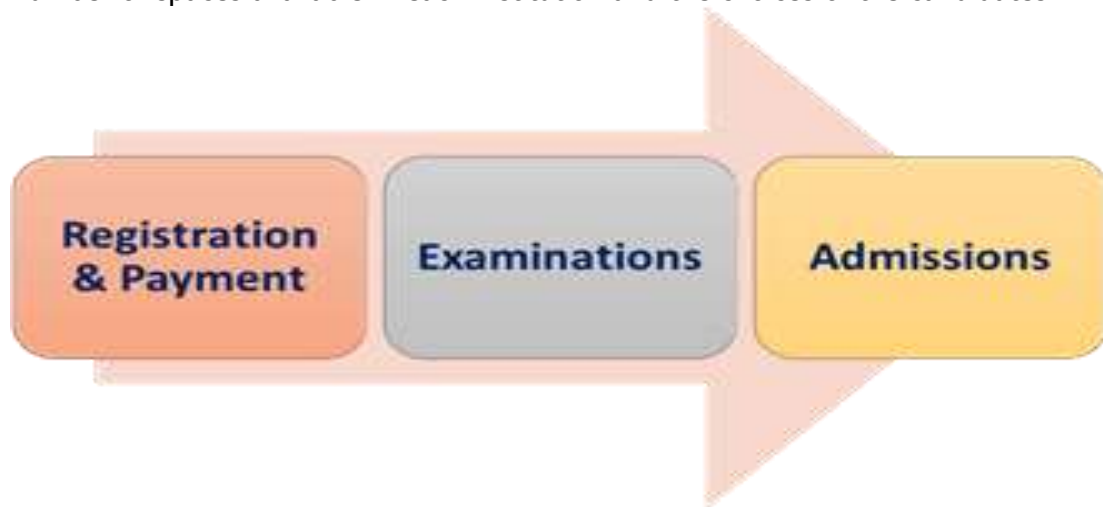


FIGURE 2:THE JAMB'S PROCESS CHAIN
The JAMB's Process Chain

Introduction

Nigeria's higher education system, with over 500 institutions and enrolling about 2.8 million students is the most expansive in Africa. By 2050, a doubling of enrolment is envisaged, a leap that will be driven by the quantum jump in population from the current estimate of 213 million to 400 million in 2050. Beyond this quantitative expansion, the desire to elevate quality, relevance, equity, efficiency and effectiveness has been propelled with greater energy in the last two decades. The quest to meet the demands of the different ministerial strategic plans and attain the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) especially goal No. 4 has been key drivers. Before the middle of the fourth quarter of 2023, stakeholders expect the Ministerial Roadmap for Education by Professor Tahir Mamman to be unveiled, adding fresh impetus to the quest to improve the education delivery system. Over the years, while attention has turned to quality improvements especially by the regulatory agencies- National Universities Commission (NUC), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and national Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE), relatively feeble concern is placed on equity especially on the broader issue of inclusive education at the higher education level. This is a glaring weak spot in Nigeria's education architecture.

Higher education cannot be taken in isolation of the foundational basic education. One of the goals of educational systems is ensuring access, retention and successful completion of basic through higher education cycles as specified in the national policy. Across the world, this provision has no exclusivity clause. All persons are to benefit regardless of socially differentiating attributes such as ethnicity, gender, religious affiliation, race, socio-economic status and disability in any form. Legislations, charters, and global agreements are in place to guide countries in the implementation of this goal. The Convention of the Rights of the Child, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are examples of these global instruments.

Nigeria has faithfully endorsed these global instruments and incorporated their provisions in national laws and policies. Looking back in history, these are not novel developments. From the 1882 Education Ordinance (updated in 1887 and 1896) to the first edition of the National Policy on Education in 1977, inclusivity in education offerings have been recurring. Today, these provisions have been strengthened as can be seen especially in the 6th (2013) edition of the National Policy on Education. Another important instrument is the 2019 Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act. The Act prohibits all forms of discrimination against persons with disability. The rights and privileges of persons with disability include education, health care, priority in accommodation and emergencies. Service providers including educational institutions are to make provision for the physically, visually and hearing impaired and all persons howsoever challenged.

Major categories of special needs persons listed in the National Policy on Education (2013)

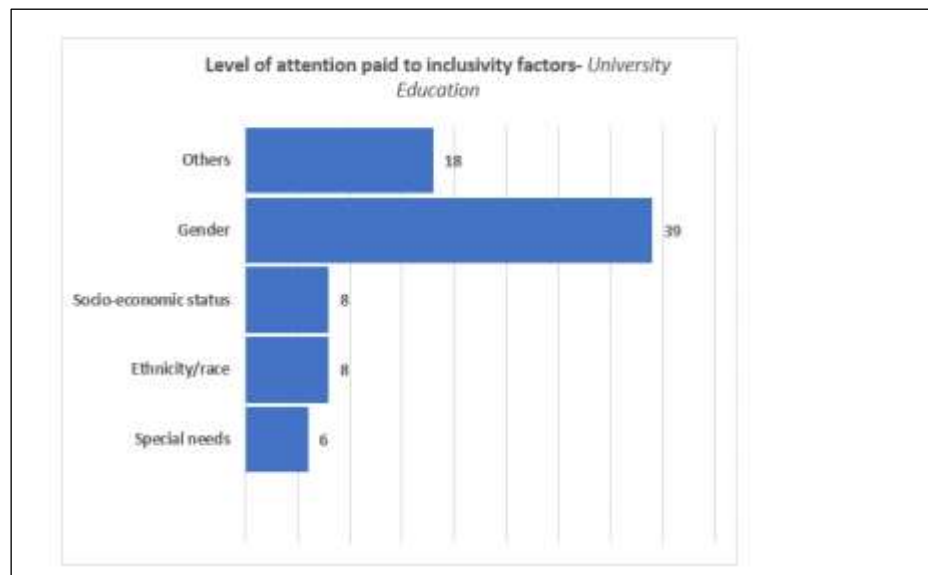
- Visual and hearing impairments
- Physical and health impairment
- Intellectual disability
- Emotional and behavioural disorder
- Speech and language impairments
- Learning disabilities
- Multiple disabilities
- Gifted and talented
- People living with albinism

Inclusive Education

The phrase “leave no child behind” has been a global refrain and mantra which aptly summarises the concept of inclusive education. Operationally, this translates to giving every citizen a chance to benefit from educational opportunities. The Universal Basic Education Act of 2004 provides that every child should be enrolled in the 9-year basic education system. In practice, this is far from achieved with the estimated 15 million (20 million?) children not in school. Clearly, inclusivity is breached. Besides, retention and successful completion are also compromised. According to UNICEF data, in 2022, primary net enrolment rate which gives a sense of primary-age children who are in school was 69%. Retention was 60% and primary completers were 46%.

Inclusive education means providing learning opportunities for groups who have traditionally been excluded. Exclusion is taken in its broadest sense to include those with disabilities, and differentiation on the basis of religion, race, ethnicity, tribe and gender. As noted by UNICEF (2023), inclusive systems value the unique contributions students of all backgrounds bring to the classroom and allow diverse groups to grow side by side, to the benefit of all.

As stated earlier, inclusive education is underpinned by global instruments. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol (A/RES/61/106) follows decades of work by the United Nations to change attitudes and approaches to persons with disabilities. It takes to



a new height the movement from viewing persons with disabilities as “objects” of charity, medical treatment and social protection towards viewing persons with disabilities as “subjects” with rights, who are capable of claiming those rights and making decisions for their lives based on their free and informed consent as well as being active members of society.

The Convention adopts a broad categorization of persons with disabilities and reaffirms that all persons with all types of disabilities must enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It clarifies and qualifies how all categories of rights apply to persons with disabilities and identifies areas where adaptations have to be made for persons with disabilities to effectively exercise their rights and areas where their rights have been violated, and where protection of rights must be reinforced.

UNESCO (2023) documents worry that “despite significant progress in the last decade, millions are still denied their right to education and learning opportunities continue to be unequally distributed. Globally, one in five children, adolescents and youth, are entirely excluded from education. Poverty, location, gender, language, disability, ethnicity, religion,

migration or displacement status are among factors that continue to dictate and limit opportunities.”

In Nigeria, pre-independence efforts at embedding inclusion into the delivery of education has surged only at a slow pace. The 1882, 1887, 1912 and 1986 Education Ordinances stressed the need to provide every child with education that is not limited by his or her physical or mental disabilities. These provisions were largely enforced. After independence and with the evolution of four versions of the National Policy on Education, the latest (officially published) being in 2013, there was an expansion and deepening of the provisions of special needs education.

The National Policy on Education (2013) and the National Policy on Special Education (2018) categorise children with visual and hearing impairments, physical and health impairment, intellectual disability, emotional and behavioural disorder, speech and language impairments, learning disabilities, multiple disabilities, gifted and talented as well as people living with albinism as people of special needs. However, the implementation of these provisions have failed and are failing to meet the expectations of the letter and spirit of the policy, exposing the depth of lip-service paid to policy prescriptions.

Although ambition and execution are not the same thing, there is a renewed hope to bring the matter of special needs education and high fidelity of its implementation to greater relief and public attention. This is the elevation from the level of policy to that of a law. In 2018, the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act, 2018 was enacted. The law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability and imposes sanctions including fines and prison sentences on those who contravenes it.

The Federal Ministry of Education (2022) notes that special needs schools in Nigeria exist as full-fledged special needs schools, that is they enrol only students with special needs; and inclusive schools (all categories of students, including those with special needs). So far, only 1,177 full-fledged special needs schools exist in the country with Kano (153), Kaduna (79) and Lagos (75) having the highest number of special needs schools. The country currently has 33,603 inclusive schools with Kano State leading with 3,522 schools; Kaduna State with 2,296 and Katsina State with 2,096. This is the broad picture at the basic education level. What about higher education?

Inclusive education in higher education in Nigeria

Not until about 2017, data on inclusive education in Nigeria’s higher education system especially in the segment of access was sparse. It was in 2017 that Professor Is-haq Oloyede as Registrar/Chief Executive of the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board set up the JAMB Equal Opportunity Group (JEOG) to administer the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) to blind candidates and others who could not be served in regular testing centres. The expanded mandate of JEOG was to track its catchment of candidates from admission to graduation and research ways of improving the delivery of inclusive education. It was also in 2017 that Professor Abubakar Adamu Rasheed as Executive Secretary of the National Universities Commission instituted a much-improved documentation of the “*State of University Education in Nigeria*” embodying statistics from all universities in Nigeria relating to admission and provision of facilities for delivering quality university education. The metrics up to 2021, though incomplete, are poised to grow from 2023.

Coverage of inclusive education in higher education in Nigeria

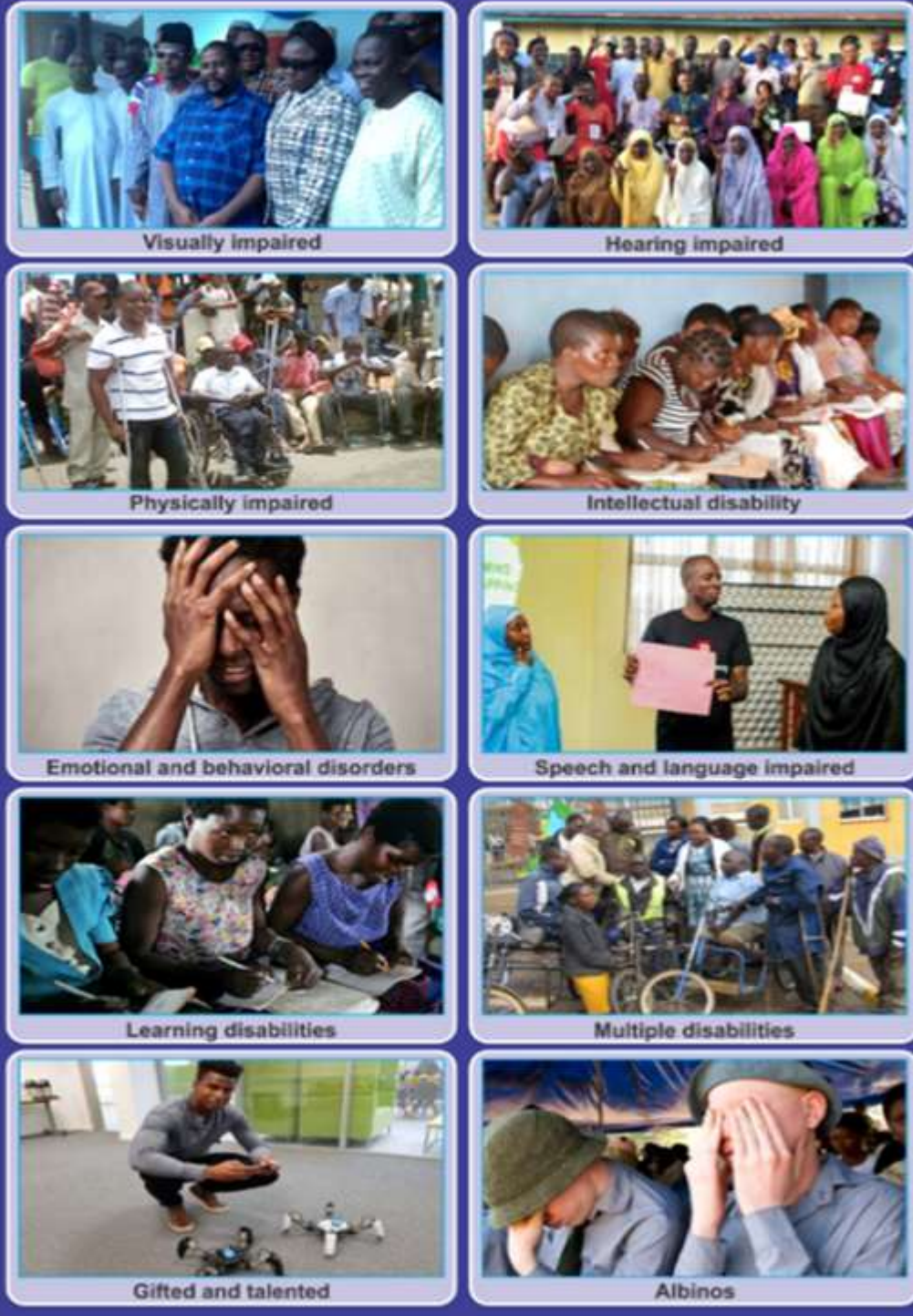


Fig 1:

Source: Okebukola and Oladejo (2023)



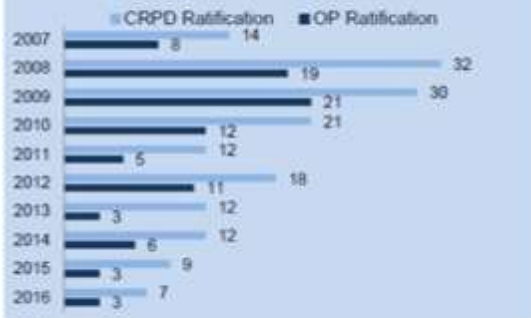
United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and its Optional Protocol (OP) were adopted on 13 December 2006, as the first comprehensive human rights treaty of the 21st century. It entered into force on 3 May 2008.

Ratifications to the CRPD and OP by Year

87% UN Member States have ratified the CRPD (168)

47% UN Member States have ratified the OP (91)



Articles of the CRPD

- Preamble
- 1 - Purpose
- 2 - Definitions
- 3 - General principles
- 4 - General obligations
- 5 - Equality and non-discrimination
- 6 - Women with disabilities
- 7 - Children with disabilities
- 8 - Awareness-raising
- 9 - Accessibility
- 10 - Right to life
- 11 - Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies
- 12 - Equal recognition before the law
- 13 - Access to justice
- 14 - Liberty and security of person
- 15 - Freedom of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- 16 - Freedom from exploitation, violence and abuse
- 17 - Protecting the integrity of the person
- 18 - Liberty of movement and nationality
- 19 - Living independently and being included in the community
- 20 - Personal mobility
- 21 - Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information
- 22 - Respect for privacy

THE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (PROHIBITION) ACT

The Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act outlaws discrimination on the basis of one's physical, mental or sensory impairment. Signed into law in January 2019, the Act sets up a National Commission for Persons with Disabilities to oversee the inclusivity of persons with disabilities in society and uplift their well-being.

While the Act provides a 5 years transitory period (from its enactment) to enable modification of public structures/services to meet the peculiar needs of persons with disabilities, other provisions are intended for immediate implementation.

This Factsheet intends to simplify key provisions of the Act in a manner that provides more clarity to the rights of persons with disabilities.

Arrangement of Sections

Part I- Prohibition of Discrimination and Awareness Programmes (Sections 1-2)

Part II – Accessibility of Physical Structure (Sections 3-8)

Part III – Road Transportation (Sections 9-12)

Part IV -Seaports, Railways and Airport Facilities (Sections 13-15)

Vision

To be an acclaimed leader in the provision of equal opportunity for inclusive access to higher education in Africa.

Mission

To use available resources to bring education to the doorsteps of all qualified persons, irrespective of any form of disability, for the attainment of overall national development of Nigeria.

Planning Assumptions

1. A greater degree of commitment, beyond rhetoric, will be paid to inclusive education in Nigeria.
2. All levels of governance- local, state and federal and sectors- public and private, will contribute to the successful implementation of the Plan.
3. JAMB with its unmatched commitment to the equal opportunity doctrine, will be the lead agency for coordinating the implementation of the Plan.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

S Strengths	W Weaknesses	O Opportunities	T Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Current focussed and purposeful leadership of JAMB.• Existence of strong advocacy groups for inclusive education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dim public perception of education of persons with disabilities.• Weak partnership among FME parastatals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• New government with invigorated dynamism to correct the ills of the past.• Ability of Professor Is-haq Oloyede to mobilise a coalition of heads of tertiary institutions and	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bureaucratic delays and bottlenecks in implementing activities in the Plan.• Funding constraints to full implementation of the Plan.

		regulatory agencies.	
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Strategic Goals

Policy

10. By 2024, establish national standards and guidelines for inclusive and equitable basic and higher education and mechanism for their quality assurance.
11. By 2025 establish and periodically update a national database of Nigerians who are eligible for inclusion in the inclusive system.

Access

12. From 2024, at least 5% annual increase in admission through JAMB, of candidates with special needs would be recorded in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.
13. From 2024, a trimodal system of UTME administration based on the preference of candidates involving (a) fully Braille; (b) fully CBT; and (c) fully read-aloud by proctor to be implemented by JEOG with a 5% annual increase to the fully-CBT mode, leading up to 2028.
14. From 2024, the conduct of UTME should increase by an annual growth rate of 2% of the population of candidates with other forms of disabilities other than visual handicap such as autism, Down Syndrome, hard of hearing and muteness that apply for and are eligible for admission to tertiary institutions.
15. Opportunities for blind/visually-impaired candidates and others with disabilities to receive quality **basic education** should be expanded by a factor of 1% of current status, every year from 2024 over the next ten years.

Process

16. From 2024, the number of universities, polytechnics and colleges of education with ambient environment including minimum facilities and human resources for delivering quality higher education to persons with disabilities should increase annually by 10%.
17. By 2028, at least 60% of students with disabilities attending higher education institutions in Nigeria should report receiving non-discriminatory attention in class, hostels and other places on campus.

Product

18. By 2028, Nigeria should be ranked among the top five in Africa and top 20 countries in the world for successful implementation of inclusive education.

2024

Roadmap

2028

Policy

By 2025, a national policy on inclusive education as a component of a revised National Policy on Education should be enacted.

By 2025 establish and periodically update a national database of Nigerians who are eligible for inclusion in the inclusive system.

Access

From 2024, at least 5% annual increase in admission through JAMB, of candidates with special needs would be recorded in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Preference of candidates involving (a) fully Braille; (b) fully CBT; and (c) fully read-aloud by proctor to be implemented by JEDG with a 5% annual increase to the fully CBT mode, leading up to 2028.

growth rate of 2% of the population of candidates with other forms of disabilities other than visual handicap such as autism, Down Syndrome, hard of hearing and muteness that apply for and

Opportunities for blind/visually-impaired candidates and others with disabilities to receive quality basic education should be expanded by a factor of 3% of current status, every year from 2024 over the next ten years.

Process

From 2024, the number of universities, polytechnics and colleges of education with ambient environment including minimum facilities and human resources for delivering quality higher education to persons with disabilities should increase annually by 10%.

By 2028, at least 60% of students with disabilities attending higher education institutions in Nigeria should report receiving non-discriminatory attention in class, hostels and other places on campus.

Product

By 2028, Nigeria should be ranked among the top five in Africa and top 20 countries in the world for successful implementation of inclusive education.

Strategic Goals, Situation Analysis and Implementation

Strategic Goal 1

By 2024, establish national standards and guidelines for inclusive and equitable basic and higher education and mechanism for their quality assurance.

Situation Analysis

One of the early steps in ensuring a sustainable innovative practice is the enactment of a national policy. Such policy provides the framework for delivering downstream activities and ensuring proper coordination. Central to the cluster of activities which emerge after policy enactment is the setting of standards and enforcement and quality assurance of such standards.

In 2015, the federal government published the National Policy on Special Needs Education as a standalone update of Section 8 of the National Policy on Education. The development of the standards and guidelines document did not follow this effort. This is a gap that needs to be fulfilled without delay. With the standards and guidelines in place, the monitoring and quality assurance processes can then be effectively activated.



The guidelines should be rested on the goal of providing equal access to educational and other services to persons falling within the Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation Services (SNERS). These will include:

Persons with Disabilities: These are persons with physical and sensory impairments including albinism, who because of their condition cannot cope with regular school/class methods and processes without formal Special Needs Educational training. In this category, we have persons with:

- *Visual Impairment* (total, partial sightedness and low vision).
- *Hearing Impairment* (mild, moderate, severe/profound hearing Impairment).
- *Physical and Health Impairment* (paraplegia, quadriplegia, seizures, orthotoid, cerebral palsy).
- *Mental Retardation/Intellectual Disability/ Intellectual Developmental Disability* (educable, trainable, bed ridden).
- *Behavioural Disorders* (hyperactivity, hypo activity/the socially maladjusted/emotional disorder).
- *Speech Impairment* (stammering/stuttering, voice disorders).
- *Learning Disabilities* (dyscalculia, dyslexia, auditory processing disorder, visual processing disorder, attention deficit disorders).

- *Multiple Impairment* (intellectual with visual impairment).
- *Autism Spectrum Disorders*.
- *Albinism*

The guidelines should incorporate special programmes which include:

- Early-age identification and nurture.
- Early-age admission into primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.
- Early completion of educational programmes at the three educational levels (primary, secondary and tertiary).
- Technical and vocational programmes beyond the regular school setting.
- Multiple learning environments in the school, home and hospital bound settings.
- Visual Impairment – Training in Orientation and Mobility (O/M) Braille Reading and Writing, use of computer with Job Access With Speech (JAWS) and repairs of special equipment etc. The facilities/equipment include, everest braille embosser, duxbury braille translator, ominipage/open book, quick tac, Job Access With Speech (JAWS) for windows, acoustic cabinet, scanner, laptop, low vision aids and devices, binocular, camera etc.
- Hearing Impairment: Training in Sign Language interpretation, audiometric technique (pure tone and speech audiometry) and computer application devices. The facilities/equipment include: audiometer, tympanometer, otoscope, video otoscope, tuning fork, Otoacoustic Emmission (OAE), Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR), Auditory Steady State Response (ASSR) etc. Total communication (include aural, oral, lip reading and Sign Language interpretation), hearing aids, cochlea implants speech synthesizer, Teletype (TTY), doorbell, alarm, auto scope, etc.
- Speech and Language Disorders: Training in speech therapy which has to do with speech/lip reading, total communication. Equipment include: speech audiometer, speech analyzer..
- Physical and Health Impairment: Training in Orientation and Mobility, use and management/manufacturing of prostheses and other mobility devices (basic physiotherapy materials for PHI, wheel chairs, cerebral palsy chairs).
- Mental Retardation (Intellectual Disability/ Intellectual Developmental Disability)
- Training in daily living skills, self-help skills, livelihood skills. Materials include: toys, plastic drawing sheets jigsaw, puzzle.
- Behavioural Disorders: Training in diagnostic assessment technique. Materials include various foreign and local assessment tools and texts.
- Learning Disabilities: Training in reading concepts and methods, speech and language concepts and methods, perceptual/cognitive concepts and methods training, Arithmetic/Mathematics concepts and techniques etc. Materials include sensory stimulation toys, plastics, drawing sheets, atomic absorption electrospectro photometer, quantum body image analyzer.
- Albinism: Training in HD Acrobat low vision assistive devices. Training of Teachers on teaching and learning for children with albinism in the classroom. Learning enhancement equipment, protective clothes, hats spectacles, special blackboard,
- Gifted and Talented – such as curriculum compacting training, use of bibliotherapy, use of e-learning mode, Individualized Education Programme/Plan (IEP), enrichment and acceleration technique especially telescoping and training in the use of historic technique. Training to use learning portals, thematic units hyperlinks, virtual learning environment, use of rubrics, web quest, museum world and adapting technology differentiated instruction, Renzulu, Learning system, providing digital museum.

Implementation Strategy

S/No.	Activity	Timeline	Action by	Performance indicator	Cost estimate
1	Set up a committee to develop "Standards and Guidelines for Inclusive and Equitable Education" with provisions for basic and higher education	November 2023	FME, JAMB (convener) NUC, UBEC, NCCE, NBTE, one Honourable Commissioner for Education in Each of the six geopolitical zones)	Committee is set up.	100,000
2	Committee sets up expanded JEOG as technical sub-committee	December 2023	Main Committee convened by JAMB	Technical sub-committee is set up	100,000
3	Technical Committee drafts and trial tests the Standards and Guidelines	January to March 2024	Technical Committee	Draft Standards and Guidelines in place	4,500,000
4	Main committee reviews and approves the draft Standards and Guidelines	April-May 2024	Main Committee	Approved Standards and Guidelines	1,450,000
5	Instrument deployed for use for national monitoring and quality assurance of inclusive education	From July 2024	FME	Adequacy of use of the Standards and Guidelines for quality assurance of inclusive education	3,240,00
				Sub-Total	6,153,240

Strategic Goal 2

By 2025 establish and periodically update a national database of Nigerians who are eligible for inclusion in the inclusive system.

Situation analysis

In the Nigerian context, it is imperative to emphasize the significance of establishing a comprehensive and precise national database that encompasses individuals eligible for participation in the inclusive education system. This database serves as a fundamental tool for facilitating efficient planning, allocating resources effectively, and ensuring the successful implementation of inclusive policies.

Nigeria does not have a comprehensive national database specifically focused on those who are eligible for inclusion in the inclusive education system.

Exemplars of data inconsistencies are worth citing. The 2006 Nigerian census reported that 3.3 million Nigerians (2.3% of the population) have disabilities, although the World Health Organization (WHO) estimated the number to be closer to 25 million. In 2008, the Federal Government estimated that around 7% of children had disabilities and that around 2.75% (90,000) of these were in primary schools and 1.85% (65,000) in secondary schools.



The Global Partnership for Education noted in 2018 that determining the percentage of children with learning disabilities is next to impossible because official data are non-existent. There are no credible official sources of data on the prevalence of children with disabilities or their engagement in education in Nigeria. Hence, this has hampered the planning and implementation of programmes, thereby preventing a full understanding of the current situation. The Federal Ministry of Education's 2016 National Education Indicators Report did not include any indicators related to children with disabilities.

Additionally, different ministries, departments, and agencies collect disparate sets of data, leading to disparities in data quality and completeness. Consequently, the inclusivity criteria employed for the purpose of identifying eligible individuals may exhibit limitations in terms of comprehensiveness and clarity, thereby potentially resulting in the exclusion of certain deserving students from the system.

Creating a comprehensive national database would involve collaboration among various government agencies, educational institutions, and non-governmental organizations. Ensuring seamless coordination and information sharing among these stakeholders is worth stressing.

Implementation strategy

Activity	Timeline	Action By	Performance indicator	Estimated cost
Develop standardized criteria and guidelines for data collection and inclusion eligibility to ensure high interrater reliability across the country	November-December 2023	Special Committee on the development of the national database set up by the FME	Standardised data collection guidelines developed	5,000,000
Develop instruments for data collection, such as questionnaires, surveys, or digital forms to suit the specific needs of inclusive education data.	February to May, 2024	FME, JAMB, NUC	Data collection instruments developed	15,000,000
Training and capacity building for data collectors and educators to improve data accuracy and promote a better understanding of inclusive education's importance	December 2023–February 2024	Special Committee on the development of the national database set up by the FME	No of persons trained in data collection for the national database	45,000,000
Provide training and capacity-building programs for educators, administrators, and other stakeholders to effectively use the database		FME, JAMB, NUC, NBTE, NCCE		
Pilot run of data collection	May – July 2024	Special Committee on the development of the national database set up by the FME	Report of pilot run of data collection	
Data entry into the centralized database system	June-August 2024	Special Committee on the development of the national database set up by the FME	Percentage completion of entry into the database	7,000,000
Update of database structure and integrity based on lessons learned from the pilot run	November-December 2024	Special Committee on the development of the national database set up by the FME	Updated database structure	2,500,000
Regular updates of the final database to reflect changes in students' status, such as transition between schools or changes in special needs requirements	September 2024	FME		50,000,000
			Sub-total	59,500,000

Strategic Goal 3

From 2024, at least 5% annual increase in admission through JAMB, of candidates with special needs would be recorded in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Situational Analysis

The establishment of the JAMB Equal Opportunity Group (JEOG) by the Registrar of JAMB, Prof. Is-haq Oloyede, in 2017 has created opportunity of access to higher education for blind and other special needs candidates. Indeed, the average success rate of over 33% for these candidates over the years is better than the national average success rate of about 25% for the regular candidates. This was achieved through the conduct of the UTME examinations for these candidates under an atmosphere that takes their peculiarities and circumstances into consideration. Thus, an increasing number of such candidates are now gaining admissions into universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnics.

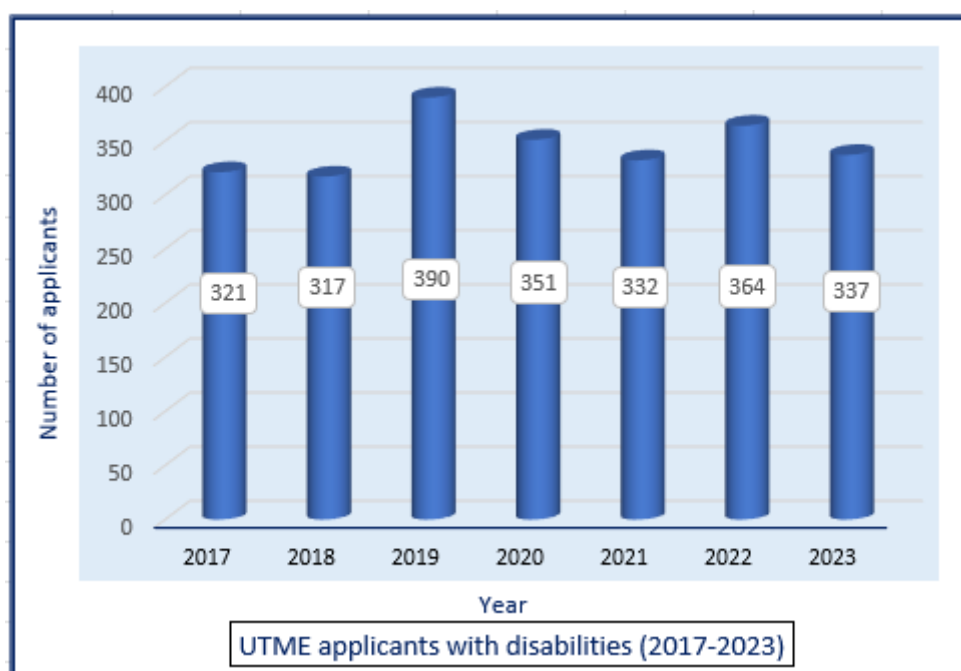


Fig. 1: Number of UTME applicants with disabilities from 2017 to 2023

It is important to stress that the summation of the numbers in fig. 1 only tells the story of those who sat for the examination. Overall, available records show that only about one-third of the applicants since 2017 have been admitted into various institutions of higher learning in the country, mainly, the universities (2023 data excluded since admission process is still in progress). As shown in fig. 2, in 2019, of the 390 candidates, a total of 175 (44.8%) were given admission. Although, this was unprecedented in the history of admission of such category of students into the Nigerian higher education system. Most of the candidates were admitted to the University of Ilorin, Bayero University Kano, University of Lagos, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, University of Nigeria Nsukka and University of Abuja. Records

have it that Bayero University Kano offered special dispensation for admitting blind candidates by expanding their carrying capacity for this category of students.

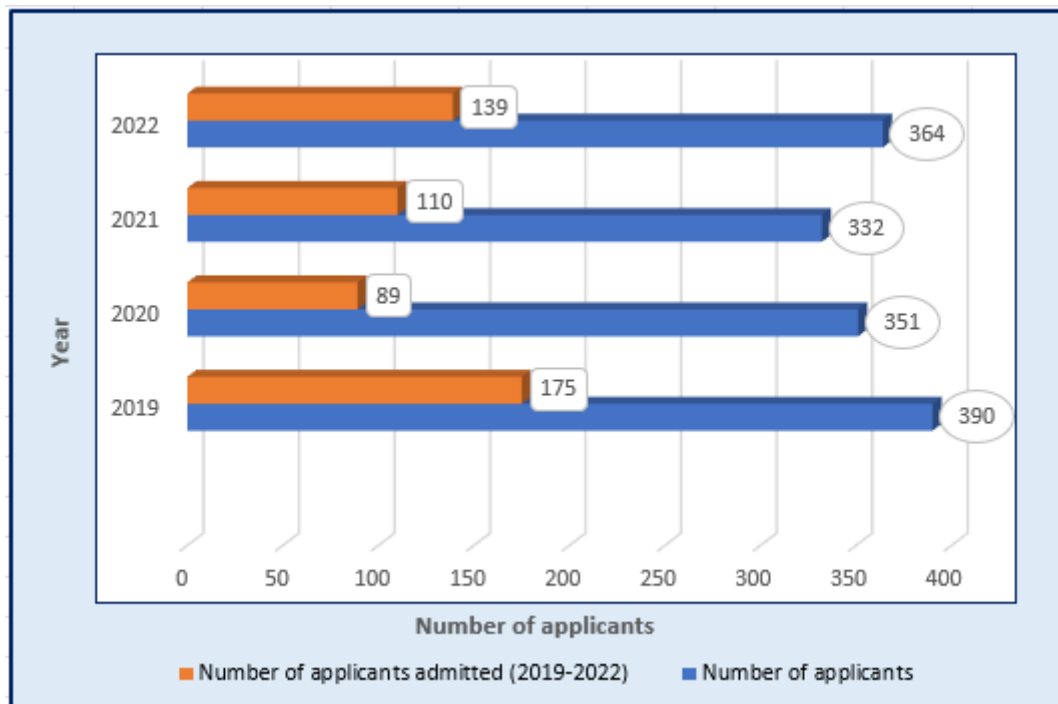


Fig. 2: Number of UTME applicants with disabilities admitted to Nigerian universities (2019 to 2022)
 In 2020, only 89 of the 351, representing just 25% of the candidates that sat for the UTME, were given admission to the following universities: Adamawa State University, Adekunle Ajasin University, Adeyemi College of Education, Akanu Ibiam Polytechnic, Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Aminu Sale College of Education, Baze University, College of Education Azare, Federal College of Education (Special) Oyo, College of Education Ikere-Ekiti, Ignatius Ajuru College of Education, Kogi State University, Lagos State University, Nasarawa State University, Niger Delta University, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Obafemi Awolowo University, Sokoto State University, University of Benin, University of Ilorin, University of Jos, University of Maiduguri, Usmanu Danfodiyo University, and Yobe State University. While in 2021 and 2022, the number of admitted candidate into higher institutions went up to 110 (33%) and 139 (38%) respectively.

Despite these modest successes recorded by JAMB through JEOG and the huge investments by JAMB, more could, and should be achieved. For one, the number of candidates with special needs who annually gain admissions into Nigerian tertiary institutions is low. Secondly, the percentage of special needs students among the general student population is extremely low. Thirdly, and more worrisome, is the fact that the number of such candidates gaining admission into tertiary institutions is not increasing at a significant rate from year to year. Since the massive improvement recorded in 2017 (when JEOG commenced its activities), there had been very little year-on-year increase – the average rate of growth being less than two percent (02%).

One reason for the almost static number of special needs candidates gaining admissions into tertiary institutions is that only few of these institutions admit the students, and the number of such institutions has become, more or less, static over the years.

There is, therefore, the need to improve the year-on-year growth rate in the number of candidates with special needs being admitted into Nigerian tertiary institutions. If 5% year-on-year increment is achieved and sustained, it would result in a 22% increment by the fifth year – compared with the base year. This, in turn, would result in an increased percentage of such students amongst the student population in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Implementation Plan

S/N	ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE	ACTION BY	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	ESTIMATED COST (N)	REMARKS
1.	Sensitization of persons with special needs on higher education opportunities	Jan/Feb 2024	JAMB/JEOG	Number of associations and persons with special needs reached out.	2,000,000	
2.	Awareness and advocacy programme for other stakeholders on available opportunities for persons with special needs	Feb 2024	JAMB/JEOG	Number of managers of special needs schools, leaders of tertiary institutions reached	2,000,000	
3.	Senate/Academic Board decision to increase the number of tertiary institutions admitting persons with special needs and implementation of the decisions.	2023 – 2024	JAMB/JEOG/ the institutions	Percentage increase in number of tertiary institutions admitting persons with special needs	1,000,000	Support from TETFund
4.	Increasing the number of candidates with special needs sitting for JEOG-organized UTME	2023- 2024	JAMB/JEOG; State and Federal Ministries of Education; School Proprietors	Percentage increase in number of candidates with special needs sitting for the UTME	50,000,000	
5.	Implementation of the national policy to increase the number of schools (basic and secondary) that cater for persons with special needs	2023-2024	UBEC, Secondary Education Commission, Federal and State Governments, School Proprietors	Percentage increase in number of that cater for persons with special needs	389,000,000	UBEC to provide funding support
5.	Changing the format for JEOG UTME for persons with special needs to accommodate more of them	2023- 2024	JAMB/JEOG	Multi-mode (CBT, Braille, Read Aloud) UTME for special needs candidates introduced	20,000,000	
6.	Training of candidates and students on the use of computer for CBT and other activities to improve	2023- 2024	JAMB/JEOG, schools	Number of student/ candidates trained; Percentage improvement in candidates'	10,000,000	

S/N	ACTIVITIES	TIMELINE	ACTION BY	PERFORMANCE INDICATOR	ESTIMATED COST (N)	REMARKS
	performance in UTME			performance in UTME		
7.	Special scholarships and others forms of support for special needs students	2023- 2024	Federal and State Governments, tertiary institutions, philanthropists	Number of special needs students receiving scholarships and other forms of support	200,000,000	Local and State Governments to lead with UBEC intervening.
8.	Senate/Academic Boards increase the number of candidates with special needs admitted by the various institutions	2024-2028	Senate/Academic Boards of tertiary institutions and JAMB	Percentage change in the number of candidates with special needs admitted by the institutions	500,000	
9	Building the capacity of JEOG and 5 Staff of JAMB on inclusive education – towards achieving the goal	Jan/feb 2024	JAMB/JEOG	Members of JEOG and Staff of JAMB trained on inclusive education.	8,000,000	
10	Mobilise resources to make more higher institutions (universities, polytechnics, colleges of education) across the country become inclusive.	From March 2024	University Councils TETFund Federal and State Govts	Quantum of resources mobilised especially funding	200,000,000 per institution	
					882,500,000	Note aggregate institutional costs for activity 10 excluded

Strategic Goal 4

From 2024, a trimodal system of UTME administration based on the preference of candidates involving (a) fully Braille; (b) fully CBT; and (c) fully read-aloud by proctor to be implemented by JEOG with a 5% annual increase to the fully-CBT mode, leading up to 2028.

Situation analysis

Students with disabilities face numerous challenges in the Nigerian education system, particularly concerning inclusivity in examination formats and accessibility to higher education opportunities. Indeed, the World Health Organisation has identified inappropriate teaching materials and methods of assessment as one of the barriers to education for children with disabilities. In recognition of this challenge, JEOG started as an initiative of the Professor Oloyede-led Administration of JAMB to provide opportunity to blind candidates to take their examinations in an atmosphere that will be conducive and give them equal opportunity to gain admission into Nigeria tertiary institutions. It started originally in four centres and over time, was spread to eleven centres. The examination was originally meant for visually impaired candidates. The scope has now been widened to include candidates with albinism and cerebral palsy.

The mode of administering the examination by JEOG has been through the read-aloud by proctor method. Below is a table of statistics showing the different modes of exams used for blind students world-wide.

Exam Mode	Usage Percentage (%)	Benefits	Challenges
Braille	30%	Familiarity for Braille users	Limited availability of Braille materials
Computer-based	40%	Accessibility features (screen readers)	- Technical issues
Read Aloud	20%	Improved understanding for auditory learners	Exam duration extension
Tactile Graphics	10%	Enhanced understanding of visuals	Requires specialized resources
Oral Exams	5%	Direct expression of knowledge	Limited time for complex responses

Source: Compiled from various internet sources

It is envisaged that with increasing technological advancement, the visually impaired candidates will be gradually phased into full CBT option.

Implementation strategy

S/No	Activity	Timeline	Action by	Performance Indicator	Estimated Cost
1.	Identify candidates that will be used for pilot study	September 2023	JEOG	List of candidates to be used for the pilot study	50,000
2.	Convert question papers to braille in 4 subjects	September 2023	JAMB	Question papers fully brailled	100,000
3.	Procure facility that will read questions to visually impaired candidates	October 2023	JAMB	Reading facility installed in some laptops	6,000,000
4.	Conduct a trial test of the braille and CBT mode for identified candidates in 4 centres	November 2023	JEOG/JAMB	Mock Exam conducted using the braille and CBT in 6 centres.	16,000,000
5.	Analysis and report of the trial modes for UTME by JEOG	November 2023	JEOG/JAMB	Report of the trial runs submitted to JAMB	200,000
6.	Deployment of software and related facilities for the 3 modes of UTME for 5% of visually impaired and other candidates with special needs in selected(6) centres	May 2024	JEOG/JAMB/ Universities	Software deployed in 6 centres. The 3 modes used in the conduct of in 6 selected centres	12,000,000
7.	Deployment of software to be used for the 3 modes of UTME for 5% of visually impaired and other candidates with special needs in selected centres	May 2025	JEOG/JAMB/ Universities	Software deployed in 7 centres. The 3 modes used in the conduct of in 7 centres	17,500,000
8.	Deployment of necessary software for the use of 3 modes of UTME for 10% of visually impaired and other candidates with special needs in 8 selected centres	May 2026	JEOG/JAMB/ Universities	Software deployed in 8 centres. The 3 modes used in the conduct of in 8 centres	20,000,000
9.	The use of 3 modes for UTME for 15% of visually impaired and other candidates with special needs in 9 centres	May 2027	JEOG/JAMB/ Universities	Software deployed in 9 centres. The 3 modes used in the conduct of in 9 centres	27,000,000
10.	The use of 3 modes of UTME for 25% of visually impaired and other candidates with special needs in ALL centres	May 2028	JEOG/JAMB	Software deployed in all the centres. The 3 modes used in the conduct of in ALL centres	55,000,000
11.				Sub-total	153,850,000

Strategic Goal 5

From 2024, the conduct of UTME should increase by an annual growth rate of 2% of the population of candidates with other forms of disabilities other than visual handicap such as autism, Down Syndrome, hard of hearing and muteness that apply for and are eligible for admission to tertiary institutions.

Situation Analysis

In Nigeria, there is no accurate census of the disability population and inconsistent prevalence rates are provided across different sources due to differing methodologies used (World Health Organisation, 2011). While the 2006 Census and the 2018 National Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) report a disability prevalence rate of approximately 2%, the World Health Organisation estimates that there are approximately 25 million persons with disabilities in Nigeria (WHO, 2011). This corresponds to 13.2% of the population and it is estimated that nearly 40% of people with disabilities in Nigeria have multiple impairments (Thompson, 2020). This number also includes people living with learning disabilities.

Nigeria's 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 country has also signed and ratified several frameworks such as the UN Convention on Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), Article 24 of which provides that all schools must be inclusive of, and accessible to all children including those with disabilities. Similarly, Nigeria has adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) framework, 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. Despite these instruments and developmental frameworks, people living with disabilities such as vision impairment, deafness, dumbness, mental health conditions, intellectual disability, acquired brain injury, autism spectrum disorder, and physical disability are faced with several challenges. These challenges include inaccessible environments, insensitive and discriminatory examination, lack of appropriate learning materials, shortage of qualified teachers, and discrimination from peers. These are some of the barriers that have prevented students living with disabilities from completing their education.

This is the *raison d'être* for the creation of the JAMB Equal Opportunity Group by the Joint Admission Matriculation Board to enable persons who are visually impaired to sit for the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME). This is a step towards ensuring that no one is prevented from taking the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) regardless of disability. Since 2017, the JAMB Equal Opportunity Group has processed over 2,600 candidates for the UTME with over a third admitted to courses of their choice institution of higher learning, mainly universities. The mode of examination administration is bimodal which includes the use of Personal Computers (PCs), traditional Braille slate, and stylus/typewriters in writing answers to questions that are read out by a subject expert. While JOEG in recent times has focused mainly on visually impaired candidates, there is a need to expand access by accommodating students with other forms of physical and learning disabilities such as

dyscalculia, auditory processing disorder, dyslexia, dysgraphia, and non-verbal learning disabilities.

Given the success gained in conducting the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination for visually impaired candidates, there is a need for the Joint Admission Matriculation Board to include candidates with other forms of disabilities.

Implementation strategy

S/No	Activity	Timeline	Action By	Performance indicator	Estimated cost	Remarks
1	Set-up a committee of multidisciplinary experts to develop a model for the UTME examination for people with various forms of disabilities.	November 2023	JAMB Equal Opportunity Group	Committee set up	1,500,000	
2	Undertake study tour of selected countries with global best practices the admission process in inclusive tertiary education	January-February 2024	Nominees of JAMB, NUC, NBTE, NCCE	Report on case studies of exemplary practices in the selected countries	23,000,000	
3	Based on experiences from the study tour of selected countries, develop a model of UTME administration that is more inclusive and which caters for candidates with all forms of disabilities.	April – May 2024	Study visit team	Model of UTME	3,500,000	Agencies in the consortium to sponsor their nominees
4	Pilot-test the new model	June 2024	JAMB Equal Opportunity Group	Number of candidates with disabilities other than those with visual handicap to which the UTME is administered.	10,000,000	
5	Revise the new model based on the pilot run experience	September 2024	JAMB Equal Opportunity Group		500,000	Expand JEOG to include specialists in aspects of disabilities not currently covered.
6	Full implementation of the new model	From UTME of 2025	JAMB Equal Opportunity Group	Number of diversities catered for in the	60,000,000 (annually)	

S/No	Activity	Timeline	Action By	Performance indicator	Estimated cost	Remarks
				UTME other than those with visual handicaps		
				Sub-total	98,500,000	Annual costs for item 6 not aggregated

Strategic Goal 6

Opportunities for blind/visually-impaired candidates and others with disabilities to receive quality basic education should be expanded by a factor of 1% of current status, every year from 2024 over the next ten years

Situation analysis

Research has shown that children with disabilities constitute more than 50 percent of the over 10.5 million out-of-school children in Nigeria. According to UNICEF, about 95 percent of children with disabilities amounting to about seven million children are out of school in Nigeria. Data from the Federal Ministry of Education notes that special needs schools in Nigeria exist as full-fledged special needs schools, that is they enroll only students with special needs; and inclusive schools (all categories of students, including those with special needs). So far, only 1,177 full-fledged special needs schools exist in the country with Kano (153), Kaduna (79), and Lagos (75) having the highest number of special needs schools. The country currently has 33,603 inclusive schools with Kano State leading with 3,522 schools; Kaduna State with 2,296 and Katsina State with 2,096.

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 do not 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. Others are 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 is deficient in the provision of inclusive and accessible basic education to children with disabilities. The UBE 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 his or her disabilities, gender, and other social status.

Implementation strategy

Activity	Timeline	Action By	Performance indicator	Estimated cost
UBEC and SUBEBs to resource at least 200 primary and secondary schools in each geopolitical zone in Nigeria (first phase) and remodelled to meet global standards of inclusion and accessibility for children with disabilities.	2024-2026	UBEC, SUBEBs, FME and State Ministries of Education	Number of primary schools remodelled	3,000,000,000
Provide funds for new constructions, renovation of classrooms, and purchase of more facilities and equipment.	2024-2028	UBEC, SUBEBs, FME and State Ministries of Education	Quantum of funds released for new construction of inclusive schools and classrooms	8,000,000,000
Organise training programmes for teachers and school staff on geopolitical zonal basis to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to support students with disabilities effectively. Training should cover inclusive teaching methods, using assistive technology, managing diverse classrooms, and fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment.	2024-2028	UBEC, SUBEBs, FME and State Ministries of Education	Number of teachers trained	15,000,000
Feedback mechanism on a yearly basis	2024-2028	UBEC, SUBEBs, FME and State Ministries of Education	Evaluation reports	2,500,000
			Sub-total	11,017,500,000

Strategic Goal 7

From 2024, the number of universities, polytechnics and colleges of education with ambient environment including minimum facilities and human resources for delivering quality higher education to persons with disabilities should increase annually by 10%.

For fuller update

Situation analysis

The number of universities, polytechnics and colleges of education with conducive learning environment for delivering quality higher education to persons with disabilities are very few (data required) The minimum standards of facilities are not spelt out in terms of types and quantity of facilities to be put in place before any tertiary institution can offer admission for this category of candidates. Estimated carrying capacities relative to the facilities and human resources are also not in place. There are no accreditation criteria for the institutions. The current situation at the preparatory lower levels may not be (data required) adequate to produce the number of persons with disabilities with required credit pass to utilise the 10% spaces that will open as a result of attainment of this goal of increasing the the number of tertiary institutions with minimum resources for their uptake.

Implementation strategy

S/No	Activities	Timeline	Action By	Performance indicator	Estimated cost N	Remarks
1.	Collect base-line data of the tertiary institutions currently offering admissions to the persons with disability	2023	JAMB/JEOG Team	Data base established and available	200,000	
2.	Develop minimum physical facilities' standards for provision of ambient environment for delivering quality higher education to the persons with disabilities	2023-24	JAMB/JEOG Team	Minimum standards specifications documented and published	500,000	
3.	Generate the minimum human	2023-2024	JAMB/JEOG Team	Minimum human resource	500,000	

	resources, academic and administrative that will be required.			requirement documented and published		
4.	Develop information guidelines for all the tertiary institutions on responsibilities and possible institutional privileges.	2023-2024	JAMB/JEOG Team	Guidelines produced and distributed	200,000	
5.	Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for ensuring compliance and achievements	2023-2024	JAMB/JEOG Team	Mechanism and procedure documented and published	200,000	
6.	Conduct a survey to determine the current training capacities of secondary and technical colleges of persons with disabilities and the annual supply gap that will arise due to the annual 10% increase in the number of the tertiary institutions offering them admissions.	2023-2024	JEOG Team	Completed survey document published	5,000,000	For each institution to be aggregated
7.	Provision of minimum human and infrastructural facilities in the tertiary institutions' establishment	2025-2050	VC, Rectors and Provosts	10% annual increase in the number of the tertiary institutions meeting the minimum standards	6,000,000	For each institution to be aggregated
8.	Accreditation programme constituted for periodic (5 years interval) assessment of the facilities and human resource	2025-2050	NUC, NBTE, NCCE	Accreditation metrics adopted by NUC, NBTE, NCCE	5,000,000	For each institution to be aggregated
9.	Identification and recognition of the centres of excellence for the training of people with disabilities	2030-2050	NUC, NBTE, NCCE	At least one recognition event by 2030	8,000,000	
				Subtotal	25,600,000	

Strategic Goal 8

By 2028, at least 60% of students with disabilities attending higher education institutions in Nigeria should report receiving non-discriminatory attention in class, hostels and other places on campus.

Situation analysis

More and more students with physical disabilities are now routinely being admitted into our tertiary institutions every year, thanks to the changing times, and particularly to the efforts of the Registrar of JAMB, Prof. Is-haq Oloyede who since the year 2017 has made concerted efforts to foster inclusiveness in promoting access to higher education institutions for physically challenged candidates in Nigeria. However, in some tertiary institutions, blind students and other candidates with special needs do not receive the kind of help or attention that they deserve while pursuing their studies. Some tertiary institutions do not seem to be making concerted efforts in admitting candidates with special needs while others actually go all the way to address the peculiar needs of some of these students. There is a great need to create a conducive atmosphere in our institutions for students with special needs.

Implementation strategy

S/N	Activity	Timeline	Action By	Performance Indicator	Cost (Naira)
1	Construction of ramps for wheelchair bound students in the entrances of hostels, public buildings, and lecture theatres	4 years (September 2023 to August 2027)	Governing Councils, Vice-Chancellors, Rectors, and Provosts of our tertiary institutions	No. of ramps constructed per college or institution per year.	620,000,000
2	Procurement of relevant and necessary IT equipment for blind students in relevant sections of the libraries of our higher institutions of learning	3 years, September 2023 to August 2026)	Tenders Board and management of teams of the colleges and universities.	Number of computers, educational software for the blind, and other IT equipment procured	80,000,000
3	Advocacy work to enhance a culture of	2 years (Sept 2023 to August 2025)	JEOG, different NGOs, Government,	No. of conferences and workshops	20,000,000

	"environmental friendliness" towards students with disabilities in their various campuses.		School authorities	organized by JEOG/JAMB, interested NGOs, and Government on inclusiveness in our higher institutions	
				Sub-total	720,000,000

Strategic Goal 9

By 2028, Nigeria should be ranked among the top five in Africa and top 20 countries in the world for successful implementation of inclusive education.

Situation analysis

Inclusivity of examinations no doubt is key to inclusive education. Inclusive education entails systematically ensuring and integrating all individual notwithstanding their diversity and uniqueness to equal opportunities in learning. According to the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASNIE) (2018) increases social and academic opportunities for both children with and without disabilities. Therefore, inclusive education significantly increases the likelihood that children with disabilities enroll in higher education. Universally, there are several reviews on inclusive educational practice that accommodate persons with various disabilities.

In Nigeria, educational practice that could increase participation of person with special needs in examination continues to garner propositions. Among these propositions is the inclusion of special needs practices during the conduct of examinations, most specifically the UTME that is the basis that affords an individual an opportunity to access higher education. In addition, provision of equal opportunities through adequate materials /resources that aids conduct of an all-inclusive examination for disabled individuals. The using of sign language and braille writing/reading skills tops the interventions. Thus, the goal to be ranked among the top five in Africa and top 20 countries in the world for successful implementation an inclusive education by 2028.

Implementation strategy

Activities	Timeline	Action by	Performance Indicator	Estimated Cost (=N=)
1. Modification of the curriculum into flexible and all-inclusive	January 2024 - July 2024	Curriculum development Committee	Sustained transformation of educational curriculum design cultures, and values.	800 000
2. Employment of more teachers/resource personnels	August 2024 – January 2025	Employment Committee chaired by the Chairman	Numbers of staff/resource personnels	1 000 000
3. Provision of material/resources and facilities	February 2025 – July 2025	Procurement Officer	Physical inspection of provided material/resources	2 500 000
4. Training of teachers in inclusive pedagogy	August 2025 – February 2026	Department in charge of training	Number of staff trained Number of Classroom practice	1 200 000

5.	Student enrollment and Student/teaching staff ratio	March 2026 – January 2027	Admission Committee	Rate of student enrollment in examination	800 000
6.	Improved plan on implementing policy on inclusive education	February 2027 – January 2028	Policy maker on Special Needs and Inclusive Education	Review of polices and improvement made so far	500 000
				Sub-Total	6 800 000

Summary of Cost Estimates

Summary of Cost Estimates

S/No.	Strategic Goal	Estimated cost of implementation
1	By 2024, establish national standards and guidelines for inclusive and equitable basic and higher education and mechanism for their quality assurance.	6,153,240
2	By 2025 establish and periodically update a national database of Nigerians who are eligible for inclusion in the inclusive system.	59,500,000
3	From 2024, at least 5% annual increase in admission through JAMB, of candidates with special needs would be recorded in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.	882,500,000
4	From 2024, a trimodal system of UTME administration based on the preference of candidates involving (a) fully Braille; (b) fully CBT; and (c) fully read-aloud by proctor to be implemented by JEOG with a 5% annual increase to the fully-CBT mode, leading up to 2028.	153,850,000
5	From 2024, the conduct of UTME should increase by an annual growth rate of 2% of the population of candidates with other forms of disabilities other than visual handicap such as autism, Down Syndrome, hard of hearing and muteness that apply for and are eligible for admission to tertiary institutions.	98,500,000
6	Opportunities for blind/visually-impaired candidates and others with disabilities to receive quality basic education should be expanded by a factor of 1% of current status, every year from 2024 over the next ten years.	11,017,500,000
7	From 2024, the number of universities, polytechnics and colleges of education with ambient environment including minimum facilities and human resources for delivering quality higher education to persons with disabilities should increase annually by 10%.	25,600,000
8	By 2028, at least 60% of students with disabilities attending higher education institutions in Nigeria should report receiving non-discriminatory attention in class, hostels and other places on campus.	720,000,000
9	By 2028, Nigeria should be ranked among the top five in Africa and top 20 countries in the world for successful implementation of inclusive education.	6 800 000
		12,963,604,046

Conclusion

References

Appendix

Appendix 1

NATIONAL POLICY ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION IN NIGERIA



FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION 2015

For further information please contact:

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FOREWORD

The National Policy on Education (NPE) 1977 paid attention to the issues on Special Needs Education by creating a section for it. The implementation of the Policy between 1978 and 2013 has been subjected to various interventions which include among others: teacher development, institutional development framework, establishment of special schools, curriculum reviews and other initiatives by the Government and Non-Governmental Organization (NGOs).

However, research at global, continental and regional levels and by human rights groups has given rise to new concepts. These have therefore necessitated the need to review the policy to ensure best practices in the field of Special Needs Education.

Based on the above, government will, in future, drive Special Needs Education on the following principles:

- Creating the least restrictive environment.
- Zero Reject (Education for all irrespective of circumstance of life, setting and services).
- Total inclusion of Persons with Special Needs within the ambience of societal operation.
- Diversification of services beyond the school setting to include the home and the hospital. I

am therefore delighted to pioneer the maiden editions of:

☞ the National Policy on Special Needs Education;

i

and

☞ the Implementation Guidelines on the National Policy on Special Needs Education.

With these documents in place, the practice of Special Needs Education (SNE) in the country would reflect best global practices for our nation's development.



Mallam Ibrahim Shekarau, CON

Sardaunan Kano,
Honourable Minister of Education.

PREFACE

Every decade brings in new series, models, patterns, concepts and practices. If a decade fails to usher in some of these new ways, it is said to be static.

Interpolations, extrapolations, needs and challenges that were not in tandem with global best practices had to be expunged from what the country has as a Policy. Nigeria is bold to ask that those actions that are no longer in vogue with world best practices should be expunged from its policy and implementation guidelines.

Situation analysis is to critically assess how effective our service delivery had been over the years. Once we were able to delineate our strengths and weakness, pinpoint our needs and prioritize them, this then enabled us prepare the National Policy on Special Needs Education. The situation analysis therefore acts as a precedent to the preparation of a National Policy in the field of Special Needs Education (SNE). Situation analysis is not about stating challenges or negativism. It is rather an opportunity to question the effectiveness of service delivery.

The National Policy on Special Needs Education lays emphasis on least restrictive environment, zero reject, total inclusion and diversification of services beyond the school target.

With the Policy and the Implementation Guidelines developed, it is expected that the practice of Special Needs Education will henceforth be based on global best practices.

This Policy is comprehensive, holistic and all encompassing as it touches all aspects of Special Needs Education. It is therefore a milestone towards the improvement of Special Education in Nigeria and its implementation will definitely enhance the educational service delivery for Persons with Special Needs.



Dr. MacJohn Nwaobiala

Permanent Secretary, Federal Ministry of Education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

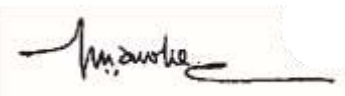
The Federal Ministry of Education (FME) wishes to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of all the stakeholders who participated in the various stages of the development of the National Policy on Special Needs Education and the Guidelines for Implementation.

We highly appreciate the consultants from the following institutions, namely: the Universities of Jos, Ibadan, Georgia USA, Bayero University Kano, and Colleges of Education (Special) Oyo and Minna, who spear-headed the drafting, critiquing and editing of the Policy. The Special Assistants (Technical and Special Duties) to the Honourable Minister of State for Education who participated actively are also appreciated.

We express our gratitude to NERDC, UBEC, NCCE, FMWASD, The Albino Foundation (TAF), National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASSET), National Association for Exceptional Children (NAEC), the Nigerian National Association for the Deaf (NNAD) and the Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities (JONAPWD) for their input.

We also wish to thank members of the Joint Consultative Committee on Education (JCCE) 55th Reference Committee on Special Education in Abuja, for their scrutiny of the documents. Our appreciation also goes to the JCCE/National Council on Education (NCE) Secretariat for their efforts to get the documents approved.

Finally, the FME staff and especially the staff of the Special Needs Education Branch are commended for their commitment and contribution to the actualization of this document.



D. C. Uwaezuoke (Esq.)

Director, Basic and Secondary Education, Federal Ministry of Education.

ACRONYM	
OAE	- Otoacoustic Emission
ABR	- Auditory Brainstem Response
ASSR	- Auditory Steady State Response
DFID	- Department for International Development
FME	- Federal Ministry of Education
FMWASD	- Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
ICT	- Information and Communication Technology
IDPs	- International Development Partners
IEP	- Individualized Education Programme/Plan
ILO	- International Labour Organization
JCCE	- Joint Consultative Committee on Education
JONAPWD	- Joint National Association of Persons with Disabilities
LRE	- Least Restrictive Environment
NASET	- National Association of Special Education Teachers
NCCE	- National Commission for Colleges of Education
NCE	- National Council on Education
NAEC	- National Association for Exceptional Children
NERDC	- Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council
NNAD	- Nigerian National Association for the Deaf
NUC	- National Universities Commission
NPE	- National Policy on Education
NGO's	- Non-governmental Organization
O/M	- Orientation and Mobility
PHI	- Physical and Health Impairment
PSN	- Personal with Special Needs
PWD	- Personals with Disabilities
SNE	- Special Needs Education

SNERs	-	Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation services
TAF	-	The Albino Foundation
UBEC	-	Universal Basic Education Commission
UNESCO	-	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Children Education Fund
UNDP	-	United Nations Development Programme
UNIJOS	-	University of Jos
USAID	-	United States Agency for International Development
WHO	-	World Health Organization

1.0 SITUATION ANALYSIS ON THE NATIONAL POLICY ON EDUCATION

1.1 BACKGROUND

The Federal Ministry of Education constituted a Committee to develop exclusively the first broad-based National Policy on Special Needs Education (SNE) in Nigeria. The constitution of the drafting committee with the mandate to formulate a National Policy on Special Needs Education gave birth to the National Situation Analysis Report. This implies that the status has changed to a National Policy (an expanded version) thereby widening its scope and activities.

The situation analysis has to do with:

- ☞ Challenges
- ☞ Prospects
- ☞ Needs
- ☞ The way forward for meeting the needs; and ☞ Prioritizing the needs.

Nigeria is involved in Special Needs Education but the present practices are not fully consistent with existing global best practices. More so, the Special Needs classrooms laboratories in the country are not yet technology driven.

The cognitive domain for the child with Special Needs is not well addressed especially for the child who possesses outstanding cognitive abilities (gifted, creative and talented children) and others who experience intellectual deficits, that is, learning disabilities, and so on. The gifted education programme in Nigeria is organized like that of a regular school. In other words, techniques and strategies (such as curriculum compacting, enrichment, bibliotherapy and so on) that drive gifted education are not generally being practised. The practice of Special Needs Education in Nigeria is therefore deficient in two areas:

1. Classroom activities - Facilities and materials that enhance learning are either lacking or where they exist-, inadequate and/or obsolete. What is more, many Special Needs Education practitioners lack the technical knowhow to operate specialized Special Needs Education gadgets.

2. Rehabilitation - Middle and high level manpower have been produced following exposure to Special Needs Education programmes. The Special Education programme in Nigeria does not emphasis rehabilitation.

Exposure to Community Based Rehabilitation

Programmes will make the beneficiaries self-reliant. The need to produce graduates with Special Needs who are self-reliant as well as gifted children who would mastermind technological breakthroughs made the formulation of a Policy on Special Needs Education even more urgent.

1.1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE POLICY:

Access to appropriate education for Persons with Special Needs is the main thrust of inclusive education. Making appropriate education available to children and youth with Special Needs is one sure way of achieving access and equity as prescribed by UNESCO for inclusive education programmes. The focus over the years has been in the area of producing graduates without preparing them for life after school. Transition programme should therefore be a necessary component of Special Needs Education in Nigeria. Global best practices of Special Needs Education occur in:

- a. School - bound settings;
- b. Home - bound settings; and

C. Hospital - bound settings.

In Nigeria, Special Needs Education takes place largely in school bound settings to the exclusion of home and hospital settings. There is therefore the need to articulate a policy that captures the home and hospital settings.

In addition, the practice of Special Education in Nigeria appears to be an open field for all. Practitioners are not formally licensed to operate in Nigeria. Inclusive Education has been misconstrued in some quarters to mean integration or mainstreaming. There is need to spell out guidelines for inclusive practices for Special Needs Education.

Also, professionals in the area of gifted education are few in Nigeria. Learning materials are generally inadequate. It is the general purpose teachers that seem to be dominating the field of Special Needs Education. Graduates of Special Education in Nigeria face the challenge of relevance on graduation because the curriculum in place is not skill-relevant after school life.

The school curriculum has limited space for Special Needs Education service educators because of the other competing courses. There is need, therefore, to produce a curriculum that will make professionals in Special Needs Education relevant on the job.

1.1.3 LEGISLATION

There was no functional legislation on Special Needs Education. The kind of laws that existed then were mainly that of grants-in-aid. Some of the laws in some states are now moribund. What exist now are policies which must be backed by legislation and the role of Special Education teachers in the context of the policy must be highlighted.

1.1.4 NOMENCLATURE

A terminology being used generally for Persons with Disability is, “physically challenged”. There is no such terminology in Special Needs Education like physically challenged. The term “Physically Challenged” describes only a limited portion of Persons with Special Needs (PSN). It has been wrongly used to mean Persons with Special Needs. Persons with Special Needs are identified as those with various forms of exceptionalities including: Visual Impairment, Hearing Impairment, Mental Retardation, (Intellectual Disability/Intellectual Developmental Disability) Physical and Health Impairment, Behavioural

Disorders, Communication and Speech Impairment, Learning Disabilities, Multiple Disabilities, at Risk Children, Autism, Albinism and the Gifted and Talented, to mention but a few.

1.1.5 EARLY IDENTIFICATION AND REFERRAL Government has not put in place a proforma and anecdotal record chart for distribution to schools, centres, hospitals, homes and public offices aimed at tracking early detection of Persons with Special Needs. This gets the public informed about where to go to for service delivery. A national directory on service centres and referrals needs to be put in place, while Special Needs diagnostic and assessment centres are of utmost necessity.

1.1.6 DATA

The absence of comprehensive data on Persons with Special Needs has hampered planning and implementation of programmes over time. In Nigeria, available data are silent on Albinism. The issue of access, vision and skin problem in the case of albinism makes their inclusion into Special Needs Education necessary.

1.1.7 EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS AND FUNDING

The classrooms of the 21st century should be entirely technology driven. There is need to look at equipment, materials and funding that will propel this process. The nature of funding is an evolving thing as we develop the policy.

1.1.8 NON-RECOGNITION OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

- ✍ Bias, cultural archetypes and negative behaviour patterns about Special Needs Education are endemic in Nigeria.
- ✍ In the National Policy on Education, it is stated that services to Persons with Special Needs should be free but it was not stated in an imperative term for the Federal Ministry of Education to operate. Positive re-attitudinization and rebranding for both the service givers and the end users should form the basis of the new policy. The sources or scope of funding Special Needs Education should be clearly defined.
- ✍ Even where funding is available, it is sometimes accessed by unqualified professionals of nonexistent organizations in the social services sector or diverted because Special Needs Education services are seen as secondary humanitarian services.
- ✍ History has shown that Special Needs Education is seen as voluntary or humanitarian affairs only, instead of scientific study.
- ✍ In Nigeria, accurate data on the incidence and prevalence of Persons with Special Needs are not available for service delivery from centres.
- ✍ It will be difficult to plan without relevant data. Data collating system centre for Persons with Special Needs are inadequate or near nonexistent.
- ✍ The various sectors of Special Needs Education are not manned by Special Needs Education professionals.
- ✍ Special Needs service provisions at pre-school level are lacking. Early Child Special Needs Education and Development is not practised because most of the private schools are owned by people who have little or no knowledge of Special Needs Education.

1.1.9 STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR ROLES

These comprise: Government, Persons Living with Disability (PWD), professionals, philanthropists, caregivers, non-governmental organizations, professional groups and organizations, private sectors, inter-disciplinary professionals, non-professionals, implementers, planners and International Development Partners (IDPs). Most of them have not fully played their roles.

- ✍ There is inadequate synergy between the Federal Ministry of Education and other Government ministries, agencies and IDPs.
- ✍ Multiple responsibilities on rehabilitation services and programmes are thereby given to the Ministries of Education, Women Affairs and Social Development, Health, Youth and Sports and Labour and Productivity.
- ✍ In the Federal Ministry of Education, these responsibilities are lumped under a Division instead of creating a Division exclusively for Special Needs Education.
- ✍ The 1978-1979 Implementation Blueprint on the National Policy on Education stated that there would be a Joint National Committee on Special Needs Education. This is yet to be implemented. It is expected that this would be done as the opportunity to bring it to birth has presented itself.

2.0 THE NATIONAL POLICY ON SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

The Federal Ministry of Education is moving away from the narrowed scope nomenclature of Special Education to a more broad-based focus of Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation Services.

2.1 VISION

A paradigm shift to maximize human potentials of Persons with Special Needs and nurture their intelligence, notwithstanding social, economic, political, religious, language and other circumstances.

2.2 MISSION

To ensure inclusion of Persons with Special Needs, provide equal opportunity, equity and access in a barrier free environment.

2.3 THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

- i. To take care of total service delivery of the physical, mental and emotional disabilities of the Nigerian child, irrespective of setting (school, home and hospital).
- ii. To provide adequate and qualitative education for all Persons with Special Needs in all aspects of national developmental endeavours.
- iii. To ensure that all Persons with Special Needs develop at a pace commensurate with their abilities and to contribute to the nation's socio- economic and technological development.

2.4 PHILOSOPHY

- i. To identify the dignity and worth of the human person and to utilize the residual strength to overcome the weakness.
- ii. To enable the Nigerian child acquire appropriate skills for global competitiveness in the world of ICT.
- iii. To develop the child into a sound, effective and productive citizen. iv. To ensure full inclusion of the individual into the community.
- v. To provide equal access to educational and other service opportunity for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels and also those outside the formal school system. For the philosophy to be in harmony with Nigeria's national goals, education has to be geared towards selfrealization, better human relationship, individual and national efficiency, effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity as well as towards attaining social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress.

3.0 SPECIAL NEEDS EDUCATION

Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation Services (SNERS) is a formal Education given to Persons with Special Needs. It is tailored towards Individualized Educational Programme (IEP). It is rendered at school, home and hospital bound settings and can be classified into three categories:

1) Persons with Disabilities: These are persons with physical and sensory impairments including albinism, who because of their condition cannot cope with regular school/class methods and processes without formal Special Needs Educational training. In this category, we have persons with:

- i. Visual Impairment (total, partial sightedness and low vision).
- ii. Hearing Impairment (mild, moderate, severe/profound hearing Impairment).
- iii. Physical and Health Impairment (paraplegia, quadriplegia, seizures, orthotoid, cerebral palsy, etc).
- iv. Mental Retardation/Intellectual Disability/ Intellectual Developmental Disability (educable, trainable, bed ridden).

- v. Behavioural Disorders (hyperactivity, hypo activity/the socially maladjusted/emotional disorder).
- vi. Speech Impairment (stammering/stuttering, voice disorders, etc).
- vii. Learning Disabilities (dyscalculia, dyslexia, auditory processing disorder, visual processing disorder, attention deficit disorders etc).
- viii. Multiple Impairment (intellectual with visual impairment).
- ix. Autism Spectrum Disorders.
- x. Albinism (an inherited genetic condition that affects the production of melanin – the pigment responsible for colouration of skin, eyes and hair).
- xi. This list is not exhausted

2) At risk children/youth: The children of nomadic pastoral, migrant fisher folks, migrant farmers, hunters, almajiri et cetera, who due to their lifestyles and means of livelihood, are unable to have access to the conventional educational provision/services and therefore require Special Needs Education/services to cater for their particular/peculiar needs and circumstances.

3) Gifted and Talented Children/Youth: These are persons who possess very high intelligence quotient and are naturally endowed with special traits (in arts, creativity, music, leadership, intellectual precocity, psychomotor prowess etc.) and therefore find themselves insufficiently

challenged by the regular school/college/university programmes in relation to pace and curricula.

4.0 RESPONSIBILITY OF FEDERAL MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The Federal Ministry of Education has the responsibility of coordinating Special Needs Education in Nigeria. This is done in collaboration with relevant Ministries and bodies e.g. Federal Ministry of Sports, Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development, Federal Ministry of Health, Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity, Federal Ministry of Justice, National Human Rights Commission, Non-Governmental Organizations as well as International Development Partners (IDPs), - UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, WHO, DFID, World Bank, USAID, ILO etc.

- a. The Federal and State Ministries of Education shall, in collaboration with appropriate bodies, provide special programmes for gifted and talented persons. The special programmes include:
 - i. Early-age identification and nurture.
 - ii. Early-age admission into primary, secondary and tertiary institutions.
 - iii. Early completion of educational programmes at the three educational levels (primary, secondary and tertiary).
 - iv. Technical and vocational programmes beyond the regular school setting.
 - v. Multiple learning environments in the school, home and hospital bound settings.
- b. Federal and State Governments shall ensure that the education of children with Special Needs shall be free at all levels.

C. Federal and State Governments shall ensure that all necessary training, facilities and equipment that would ensure easy access and implementation of Special Needs Education programmes and services are in place for the following groups:

☞ **Visual Impairment** – Training in Orientation and Mobility (O/M) Braille Reading and Writing, use of computer with Job Access With Speech (JAWS) and repairs of special equipment etc. The facilities/equipment include, everest braille embosser, duxbury braille translator, ominipage/open book, quick tac, Job Access With Speech (JAWS) for windows, acoustic cabinet, scanner, laptop, low vision aids and devices, binocular, camera etc.

☞ **Hearing Impairment:** Training in Sign

Language interpretation, audiometric technique (pure tone and speech audiometry) and computer application devices. The facilities/equipment include: audiometer, tympanometer, otoscope, video otoscope, tuning fork, Otoacoustic Emission (OAE), Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR), Auditory Steady State Response (ASSR) etc. Total communication (include aural, oral, lip reading and Sign Language interpretation), hearing aids, cochlea implants speech synthesizer, Teletype (TTY), doorbell, alarm, auto scope, etc.

☞ **Speech and Language Disorders:** Training in speech therapy which has to do with speech/lip reading, total communication. Equipment include: speech audiometer, speech analyzer etc.

☞ **Physical and Health Impairment:** Training in Orientation and Mobility, use and management/manufacturing of prostheses and other mobility devices (basic physiotherapy materials for PHI, wheel chairs, cerebral palsy chairs) etc.

☞ **Mental Retardation (Intellectual Disability/ Intellectual Developmental Disability)**

Training in daily living skills, self-help skills, livelihood skills. Materials include: toys, plastic drawing sheets jigsaw, puzzle etc. ☞ **Behavioural Disorders:** Training in diagnostic assessment technique. Materials include various foreign and local assessment tools and texts.

☞ **Learning Disabilities:** Training in reading concepts and methods, speech and language concepts and methods, perceptual/cognitive concepts and methods training, Arithmetic/Mathematics concepts and techniques etc. Materials include sensory stimulation toys, plastics, drawing sheets, atomic absorption electrospectro photometer, quantum body image analyzer.

☞ **Multiple Impairment:** Individualized

programme requirement and technique in needs assessment training.

☞ **Albinism:** Training in HD Acrobat low vision assistive devices. Training of Teachers on teaching and learning for children with albinism in the classroom. Learning enhancement equipment, protective clothes, hats spectacles, special blackboard, e.t.c

☞ **Gifted and Talented** – such as curriculum compacting training, use of bibliotherapy, use of e-learning mode, Individualized Education Programme/Plan (IEP), enrichment and acceleration technique especially telescoping and training in the use of historic technique. Training to use learning portals, thematic units hyperlinks, virtual learning environment, use of rubrics, web quest, museum world and adapting technology differentiated instruction, Renzulu, Learning system, providing digital museum.

☞ **Community - Based Rehabilitation and**

Mental Health - To focus on the Nigeria health care system, the roles of the mental health team and mental health rehabilitation worker. Examine the common pictures and unique roles of physical therapy, therapeutic recreation etc.

☞ **Community Based Rehabilitation and Primary Health** - To Focus on biomedical issues, social and behavioural factors related to health and environment etc.

☞ **Community - Based Rehabilitation and Adult Disabilities** - To focus on the genesis of disabilities, types, causes, prevention, identification and rehabilitation approaches etc.

- ✍ **Community - Based Rehabilitation and Childhood Disabilities-** To focus on the principles of community based rehabilitation and childhood disabilities, exploration of the concept of community, rehabilitation and childhood disabilities, intervention programmes etc.
- ✍ **Livehood and Rehabilitation Therapy** - To focus on economic empowerment opportunities, instructional strategies and techniques that respond to the diverse learning styles and needs of learners, training design, organization and delivery or programmes, post - training support for micro-enterprise development etc.
- ✍ **Community Based Rehabilitation and Social Empowerment** - To focus on life span development, interpersonal communication, health behaviours and society, stress, health and college life, homelessness etc.

5.0 Special Training and Re-training of Personnel:

- ✍ Capacity building/development.
- ✍ Developing counselling and relevant teaching techniques for various categories of Persons with Special Needs.
- ✍ Developing relevant therapeutic techniques.
- ✍ Keep abreast with modern/best practices and research techniques in the various areas of Special Needs Education.
- ✍ Developing course work for educators of the gifted, creative and talented tutors, parents and students.
- ✍ Providing internship/exchange programmes for policy makers, implementers and practitioners in the field of Special Needs Education.

6.0 Teacher - Pupil Ratio – shall be 1:5-10 in inclusive classroom, 10 being the maximum and 5 being the normal.

7.0 Curriculum -Multiple curricula and differentiated curricula that will be tailored to individualized needs.

8.0 Planning of Special Needs programmes and Services – Adequate arrangement shall be made to relate programmes and services to individualized needs and personnel capacity building shall be projected to match service needs.

9.0 Access – Universality of access, removal of all forms of barriers that may interfere with learning and other support services are to be provided to meet their unique needs.

10.0 Adaptation of various equipment, materials and facilities - The following shall be carried out to determine relevance of usage before equipment/materials and facilities are procured or built:

- ✍ Sensitization and awareness creation.
- ✍ Advocacy and mobilization.

11.0 Physical Facilities

In Nigeria, areas of Special Needs that were inadequately serviced are now requiring access to full service delivery. Consequently, existing facilities shall be upgraded and new structure put in place.

- ✍ **Specialized Facilities** - As the scheme advances, there shall be need for specialized facilities to be built such as Special Needs laboratories, clinics and resource centres within the various existing centres/schools with provision of virtual learning resources, hyperlinks and computer networks.

- ✍ **Architectural Design** – shall be disability friendly, that is, provision of toilets, ramps, enlarged entrances, classrooms, administrative offices, embossed Braille speech and language laboratories, doorbells, as well as indicators on doors and elevators shall be provided etc.
- ✍ **Environment** – Ensuring that outdoor play areas and roads are barrier and hazard free and generally disability friendly, containing hyperlinks and portals for lessons.

12.0 IDENTIFICATION AND ASSESSMENT OF PERSONS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The following professionals play various roles in the identification and assessment of Persons with Special Needs.

- ✍ **Special Needs Education professionals** – such as learning disabilities, Special identification and assessment specialists, audiologists, Speech therapists and so on.
- ✍ **Interrelated professionals** - such as medical practitioners, clinical psychologists, counselling school psychologists, neuro-psychologists, physiotherapists, nurses, and physiologist etc. occupational therapists and rehabilitation counsellors shall equally play the role of identification and referral.
- ✍ **Parents/guardians** - who are the primary source of identification and shall consent to make the children available for further action including screening, diagnosis, assessment and placement; and
- ✍ **The School**- shall be required to arrange regular sensory, medical and psychological screening assessments to identify any incidence of disability.

13.0 Stakeholders

The National Policy on Special Needs Education shall recognize the following stakeholders in order to maximize service provisions for Persons with Special Needs.

- Federal Ministry of Education
- ✍ Federal Ministry of Finance
- ✍ Federal Ministry of Labour and Productivity
- ✍ Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
- ✍ Federal Ministry of Health
- ✍ Federal Ministry of Youths and Sports
- ✍ Federal Ministry of Justice
- ✍ Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council
- ✍ Universal Basic Education Commission
- ✍ National Universities Commission
- ✍ National Teachers' Institute
- ✍ National Institute for Planning and Administration
- ✍ National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education
- ✍ National Commission for Nomadic Education
- ✍ National Commission for Colleges of Education
- ✍ Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board
- ✍ National Planning Commission
- ✍ Human Rights Commission
- ✍ National Orientation Agency
- ✍ National Population Commission
- ✍ National Bureau of Statistics
- ✍ Federal Fire Service
- ✍ National Emergency Management Agency

(NEMA)

- ☒ State Governments
 - Local Governments
- ☒ International Development Partners
- ☒ Corporate Organizations
- ☒ Civil Society Organizations
- ☒ Non Governmental Organizations
- ☒ Faith Based Organizations
- ☒ Professional Groups in Special Needs
 - Education
- ☒ Private Sector
- ☒ Media
- ☒ Research Institutions
- ☒ Community Based Organizations ☒ Traditional Rulers
- ☒ Corporate Organizations

14.0 Service Provision Centres

Service provision centres shall be established in schools, hospitals and home/private bound settings for Persons with Special Needs. Such centres shall include among others, Special Needs Diagnostic and Assessment Centres, resource rooms, Speech and Language therapy centres, audiology clinics, children clinic, and transition work skill preparation centres.

15.0 Legislation

Government shall put in place functional legislative framework with implementation force for Persons with Special Needs. These include:

- i. The rights of Persons with Special Needs as citizens;
- ii. The responsibility of each level of government in
 - the provision of education for Persons with Special
 - Needs; iii. Environmental rights of Persons with Special
 - Needs; iv. Federal guidelines for funding education of
 - Persons with Special Needs
- v. Communication rights of Persons with Special
- Needs; vi. Architectural barrier-free specifications for
- Persons with Special Needs; vii. Incentive grants for Persons with Special Needs in and out of
- school;
- viii. Employment of Persons with Special Needs after training;
- ix. Consequential effect or failure to comply with any provision of the legislation for Persons with
- Special Needs.

16.0 Funding/Resource Mobilization

The provision of Special Needs Education requires heavy funding and comprehensive planning, especially when the population of those requiring such services in Special Needs Education increases by the day. Such funding and resources shall be required for the following:

- I. Special facilities that are free of architectural barriers or have appropriate architectural modification

- ii. Special equipment and materials
 - iii. Resource centres
 - iv. Diagnostic and assessment centres
 - v. Supportive services
 - vi. Personnel development
 - vii. Scholarships for Persons with Special Needs
 - viii. Workshops and seminars
 - ix. Special library
 - x. Transportation
 - xi. Administrative and management services
 - xii. Monitoring and data collection and records
- There shall be adequate remuneration (Special Needs Education Allowance) for teachers and those working with Special Needs units, centres and institutions.

17.0 Financial Responsibility

Funding required for Special Needs Education shall be provided by:

- ✍ Federal Government
- ✍ State Government
- ✍ Local Government
- ✍ Government Agencies/Parastatals
- ✍ Private Sector
- ✍ International Development Partners
- ✍ Non-Governmental Organizations (Local and International)
- ✍ Corporate Organizations
- ✍ Civil Society Organization
- ✍ Faith Based Organizations
- ✍ Individuals and philanthropists

18.0 Administration

Educational leadership is the hub around which all activities in education rotates. The Federal Ministry of Education shall be the coordinator of government at the various levels. Therefore, for effective administration of the education of Persons with Special Needs in Nigeria, there shall be three major operational divisions which represent the three levels of government – Federal, State and Local Governments.

The Federal Ministry of Education shall coordinate the activities of State Ministries of Education. There shall be regular inspection and counselling at other levels of governments on matters relating to implementation of programmes for the education of Persons with Special Needs.

18.1 The Administrative Structure

The administrative structure of the education for Persons with Special Needs shall follow the existing administrative structure of the regular school system.

Government, however, shall ensure that specialists of the education of Persons with Special Needs are available at Zonal, State and Local Government levels.

- i. Each State shall establish at least, one diagnostic and assessment centre for early identification, analysis and placement of Persons with Special Needs to determine proper and adequate intervention.
- ii. Each Local Government Area shall establish at least one pilot inclusive setting to accommodate Persons with Special Needs to meet their needs.

19.0 Staff Development

There is need to select a special breed of teachers for highly specialized training to inject adequate Special Needs Education into pre-service teachers education programme. Both administrators and teachers should be selected and trained to acquire in-depth knowledge in various specialized areas in the field of Special Needs Education. Faculties of Education, Institutions and Colleges of

Education shall be involved in designing training programmes to cater for the training needs of these personnel. The Teacher Education curriculum must differentiate clearly administrative responsibilities. Educational institutions shall introduce basic courses of Special Needs Education into Teacher Education curriculum at the Nigerian Certificate of Education (NCE), undergraduate, Post Graduate Diploma in

Education (PGDE) and Post Diploma in

Education(PDE) levels. The National Universities Commission (NUC) and National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) shall prevail on Faculties of Education and Schools of Education to introduce basic courses in Special Needs Education nationwide. The courses shall be taught by professional special educators.

19.1 Support Staff Development

Support staff encompasses all who are not necessarily teaching staff. These include nurses, psychotherapists, school counsellors, sign language interpreters, brailers, brailnote takers, braille transcribers, sighted guides etc. Effort shall be made by government to ensure that the services of these are needed and training will be provided to update their skills.

19.2 Administrative Staff

The staff at the Ministries (Federal, State as well as the Local Government levels) who will be charged with the administration of Special Needs Education shall also be given staff development attention.

20.0 Instructional Materials

Instructional materials constitute an integral part of the conception of the physical facilities. It includes general classroom materials, clinical services materials, diagnostic and assessment materials etc. reading text, films, educational softwares and technological softwares. The supply of instructional materials shall therefore correspond with the Special Needs services being rendered. Thus, the schools, the units, centres, clinics, and laboratories shall be designed to deliver Special Needs services that are enriched in terms of staffing, equipment and materials in order to give equal opportunity for optimum or maximum development of human potential and intelligence through quality programme services.

THE POLICY DRAFTING COMMITTEE

S/N	Name	Organization	Post
1.	Prof. Iheanacho, I.J.	Dept. Special Needs Education and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Jos	Chairman
2	Uwaezuoke, D.C. (Esq.)	Director, Basic & Secondary Education, FME	Member
3	Omotowa, E.B . (Mrs.)	DD Special Education, FME	Member
4	Ogbobilea, Loretta K.	AD Special Needs Education	Member
5	Nduka, Ngozi (Mrs.)	AD (Planning, FME)	Member
6	Omale, O.A.F	AD JCCE &NCE FME Secretariat	Member
7	Dr. Ayewoh, Oluwafemi	SA (Technical) HMSE, FME	Member
8	Oparah Lambert	SA (Special Duties) HMSE, FME	Member
9	Dr. Shonibare, D.O.	SNEB Unit, NERDC Sheda, Abuja	Member
10	Prof. Nwazuoke, I A.	Department of Special Education University of Ibadan	Member

11	Assoc. Prof Dantata, F	Department of Special Education, Bayero University, Kano	Member
12	Dr. Okuoyibo, J.N	Federal College of Education, Special Oyo	Member
13	Prof. Agunloye, O.O	Department of Educational Leadership, Counselling and Special Education, University of Georgia, USA	Member
14	Isah, B.M	CEO Special Needs Education, FME	Member
15	Anyanwu, B.N	ACEO Special Needs Education, FME	Member
16	Nwankwo, E.N	ACEO Special Needs Education, FME.	Member
17	Ekwughu, B.U	SEO (ANFE) FME	Member

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7	Oyundoyin J.O.	University of Ibadan, Ibadan
8	Anakwe, A.I.	University of Jos, Jos
9	Nalado, A.	College of Education, Minna
10	Epelle, Jake	The Albino Foundation
11	Kasim, Afam	Joint National Association of Person with Disability (JONAPWD)
12	Nwaeseni, Felix	Federal Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
13	Acsu Ann	Universal Basic Education Commission
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9	Daramola, Martina O. (Mrs.)	Vice-President, National Association of Special Education Teachers (NASSET), Abuja Chapter
10	Uji, VI.	National Commission for Colleges of Education
11	Adaka, Terfa Ahon	National Association for Exceptional Children (NAEC) Federal College of Education (Technical), Gombe
12	Anyanwu, B.N.	ACEO, Special Needs Education, FME
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