

From Policy to Practice: Closing the Compliance Gap in Inclusive School Infrastructure for Learners with Cerebral Palsy in Post-Transition Nigeria

Theoretical Frameworks, Empirical Evidence and Reform Recommendations

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Publication Date: 2026/10/17

Abstract: Nigeria's Prohibition of Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act (2018) was a progressive policy commitment towards inclusive school infrastructure in Nigeria. A five-year transitional provision expired in January 2024 on compliance with accessibility requirements. Evidence consistently shows that despite the expiry of this provision, compliance in school infrastructure remains extremely low, especially in the private education sector and especially concerning the inclusive needs of learners with cerebral palsy (CP) whose involvement is most acutely determined by the built environment. This paper interrogates the policy-to-practice gap in Nigeria's inclusive school infrastructure by presenting evidence derived from mixed methods case study data in a private international school in Ibadan, Nigeria and a systematic synthesis of the theoretical, policy and empirical literature. Situated within the Social Model of Disability (Oliver, 2013) and the framework of Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2024), this paper is framed by the 'school environment as the third teacher' conceptualization (Barrett et al., 2019) and conceptualizes the lack of accessible school infrastructure not as a technical problem, but as structural violation of rights. By exploring the dichotomy between symbolic and substantive inclusion (Carrington, 2009; Ainscow, Booth and Dyson, 2006), this paper advances a case for substantive inclusion of learners with CP by systematic integration of universal design principles in the built environment, supported by enforcement mechanisms, technical guidance and financial interventions. A reform agenda structured around four pillars-legislative enforcement, technical standardisation, financial empowerment and accountability is put forth to underpin future inclusive school infrastructure policies in Nigeria.

Keywords: Disability Legislation, Inclusive Education Policy, Universal Design for Learning, Social Model of Disability, Cerebral Palsy, School Infrastructure, Nigeria, Sub-Saharan Africa.

How to Cite: James Onole Okhakhu (2026) From Policy to Practice: Closing the Compliance Gap in Inclusive School Infrastructure for Learners with Cerebral Palsy in Post-Transition Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 11(10), 921-929. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct003>

I. INTRODUCTION

A legislative deadline of significant concern passed largely unnoticed by the general public in Nigeria in January 2024. The five-year grace period for all public buildings (including schools) to be brought into compliance with the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2018) had expired. For the millions of Nigerian citizens with physical impairments, and the families of the estimated 200,000–300,000 Nigerian children living with Cerebral Palsy (CP)

(Olusanya et al., 2020), this date should have heralded a new era of legally enforceable access to education. Instead, the available evidence points towards what might best be described as a 'compliance vacuum': a post-transition period in which the legal mandate for infrastructure to be compliant is in place, but mechanisms to ensure compliance are weak, and the physical infrastructure of Nigerian schools is essentially unchanged.

This paper answers the urgent and underexplored question of what causes a gap to exist between Nigeria's

inclusive education policy commitments and the physical infrastructure of school environments for children with CP, and of what theoretical and practical resources can be deployed to close it. It has a two-part contribution. Firstly, it provides a theoretically informed explanation of the mechanisms that sustain the gap by applying the Social Model of Disability (Oliver, 2013), Universal Design for Learning (CAST, 2024), and the framework of the 'school environment as the third teacher' (Barrett et al., 2019). Secondly, it proposes a comprehensive reform framework, the Post-Transition Inclusive Infrastructure Framework (PTIIF), drawing upon evidence from a mixed-methods case study of a private international school in Ibadan, Nigeria, and contextualizing it with the wider literature on disability and education in Sub-Saharan Africa.

This paper is organized as follows. Section 2 discusses Nigeria's inclusive education policies and legislative frameworks. Section 3 develops the theoretical framework that informs the analysis. Section 4 presents findings from the case study with specific attention to policy-relevant results. Section 5 analyzes the structural mechanisms perpetuating the compliance gap. Section 6 outlines the PTIIF and its four pillars. Section 7 discusses the implications for policy, practice, and research. Section 8 concludes.

The analysis explicitly sets out to examine the situation in the post-2024 compliance period, a new and under-researched phase of Nigeria's engagement with disability rights legislation, and to provide an evidence base to inform policy, practice and the work of development practitioners working on substantive inclusion of students with physical disabilities in Nigeria and in the wider region.

II. THE NIGERIAN LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY LANDSCAPE FOR INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

➤ *International Commitments and their Domestic Translation*

Inclusion, for Nigeria is the product of the ratification of several international frameworks, most notably, Nigeria is a state party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) (United Nations, 2006). Adopted by Nigeria in 2010, UNCRPD's Article 24 places a clear obligation on Nigeria not to exclude persons with disabilities from the general education system because of disability, with the provision of reasonable accommodation for their specific needs. Similarly, Nigeria supports the attainment of UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 (United Nations, 2015), which provides for inclusive and equitable quality education for all, while paying particular attention to persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups.

Domestically, some of the major policy and legislative frameworks for inclusion in Nigeria are the National Policy on Inclusive Education (Federal Ministry of Education, 2016), which calls for the inclusion of all children in mainstream schools, and the Universal Basic Education Act (2004), which mandates nine years of free and compulsory and universal education without any form of discrimination.

This provides a robust legal and policy framework. Most importantly, there has recently been a development in law, that is, the Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities (Prohibition) Act (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2018). This law, which came into effect on 26 April 2018 (Section 32), outlaws the use of language and other discriminatory practices against persons with disabilities in all areas of human and public life, requires the retrofitting of all public buildings to become accessible and creates a National Commission for Persons with Disabilities as a regulatory body for implementing and monitoring compliance. Critically, section 6 of this law allows a 5 year grace period for compliance, now elapsed.

➤ *The Compliance Gap: Evidence and Dimensions*

In spite of this legal structure however, a huge disparity between policy ambition and actual implementation in practice has consistently been documented by researchers and civil society groups in the public secondary education sector. Bamisaye et al. (2024) discovered that although majority of public secondary school teachers in Kwara State are aware of the existence of the Disability Act 2018, only some minority (below one third) has experienced institutional actions relating to building modifications. Furthermore, the most common obstacle to school admission for children with disability in Lagos, Nigeria, are infrastructural barriers in schools and in this context, most parents reported that a number of schools turned their children away based on their inability to ensure safe access and maneuverability for a child with disability especially mobility impaired children (Brydges and Mkandawire, 2020). Additionally, Adewumi and Mosito (2019) indicated that as of late 2023, only 20 of Nigeria's 36 states are yet to implement the Act, thus leaving a considerable part of its enforcement at the subnational level open to questions.

The private education sub-sector has also been recognized as a more problematic issue as it comes with various challenges such as high level of freedom, weak oversight by the authorities, converted residential buildings often being used as schools, and overall lower commitment to infrastructural requirements. Due to these issues, accessibility is not a priority in these schools compared to aesthetics, academic performance or reputation, thus, most inclusive education settings have rhetorical rather than practical architectural structures (Ihebom and Uko, 2020). The table below represents a cross section between key legislations within the Disability Act and what have been found to be compliance with such within the Nigerian school sector.

Table 1 Key Provisions of Nigeria's 2018 Disability Act and Evidence of Compliance in the School Sector

Provision	Act Requirement	Evidence of Compliance	Key Sources
Physical accessibility	Modify all public buildings to include ramps, lifts, accessible sanitation within 5 years	Predominantly non-compliant in private sector; partial in public sector	Bamisaye et al. (2024); Brydges & Mkandawire (2020)
Regulatory enforcement	National Commission for Persons with Disabilities to monitor and enforce	Commission established but enforcement capacity remains limited	Adewumi & Mosito (2019)
Prohibition of discrimination	Prohibit exclusion of persons with disabilities from all public services, including education	Many schools continue to refuse enrolment to children with physical disabilities	Brydges & Mkandawire (2020); UNICEF (2020)
Subnational implementation	State and local governments to align policies and infrastructure	Only 20 of 36 states had begun implementation by end of 2023	Adewumi & Mosito (2019)
Technical guidance	Minister to issue guidelines and standards for accessibility	Context-specific technical guidelines for schools largely absent	Bamisaye et al. (2024)

III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

➤ *The Social Model of Disability: From Medical Deficit to Structural Rights*

The underpinning social theoretical framing of this article is the Social Model of Disability which fundamentally reconceptualizes disability as a socially constructed rather than biologically individualised or a deficiency of the physical person. As formulated originally inUPIAS(1976) and elaborated by Oliver (1983, 1996, 2013) the model differentiates between impairment (a loss or reduction in the function of body or mind) and disability (an inferior form of the same experience of life due to social barriers and discrimination). In this conceptualisation, a learner with CPis disabled not by their motorimpairment , but by the existence of stairs, doorways of an insufficient width and inaccessible toilets; structural and environmental design decisions. This distinction is incredibly practical in terms of implications for how to ameliorate disadvantage. In contrast to the medical model of disability where the site of disadvantage is within the individual and the response consists of remedial intervention, the social model of disability places the locus of disadvantage within the social structures and proposes the redesign of structures. When applied to the infrastructure of schools, In this framework inaccessible infrastructure could therefore be considered an act of structural discrimination (Inclusion London, 2025); not an oversight or an omission, but an intentional design that presumes an unimpaired person as the archetypal or user of spaces and places.

Furthermore, critically, the social model transfers responsibility for such disadvantage from the disabled individual to society and/or institutions. The failure to provide appropriate, and thus inaccessible infrastructure is the fault of the institutions; architects; policy makers and regulators not the responsibility of the individual learner or her family. When disability becomes understood as a form of discrimination rather than as a deficiency within an individual then failure to address this may become enforceable through legal processes within disability and Human Rights legislation.

➤ *Universal Design for Learning: From Principle to Micro-Architecture*

The UDL framework developed at the Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST, 2024) offers a working blueprint that can operationalize the structural inclusion principle of the social model into design recommendations. According to UDL, it should be standard practice to design learning experiences and environments from the beginning for broad use, reducing the need for accommodations and retrofits later on. Originally conceived with curriculum, UDL is now understood to include the physical environment of learning (Roski et al., 2021).

UDL in the physical learning environment can include, for children with CP whose motor limitations include spasticity, low grip strength, instability, fatigability and involuntary movements, what some scholars refer to as the 'micro-architecture' of schools: level-door handles that can be operated with little grip strength, height-adjustable tables that can accommodate a child in a wheelchair, non-slip flooring, double-width hallways that can accommodate two-way traffic, flexible classroom seating arrangements, and accessible recreation space for a child with mobility impairments. macro vs micro-accessibility This difference between macro-accessibility- whether the school itself has a ramp- and micro-accessibility- whether the entire environment of the school can be practically used- is especially crucial in assessing the Nigerian context, where schools that have added only a ramp may still appear and indeed present themselves as 'accessible' but their interiors are essentially disabling. Thus, as Ajuwon (2019) asserts, 'accessible schools ... Render persons with disabilities dependent for their participation rather than encouraging independent participation.'

➤ *The School Environment as the Third Teacher*

Schools as Pedagogical Environment School architecture as a "third teacher" has also been conceptualised drawing from the principles of the Reggio Emilia school and has been evidenced by numerous empirical studies in the fields of environmental psychology and educational architecture research (e.g. See the comprehensive World Bank report by Barrett et al, 2019 that show that school architecture can contribute to up to 16% of variation in student's academic progress and explained through three key

factors, naturalness, stimulation and individualisation). If school architecture, through these factors, has implications for student academic progress it must also have implications for learners with CP.

Specifically, within the construct of 'naturalness', school facilities not only make up a component of the overall physical well being of learners but a barrier to health with regard to lack of adequate toilet facilities resulting in Urinary Tract Infections (UNICEF 2020), and barriers to physical activity leading to unnecessary fatigue and muscle stiffness in restricted learning spaces or recreational facilities. In 'stimulation', an inability to access the specific needs for learning such as; laboratories, libraries, arts spaces and sports facilities result not simply in inconvenience but as a fundamental barrier to the curriculum. Within 'individualisation', there is an obvious issue with a lack of the facility to make furniture that is height adjustable, adaptable or can be moved easily within classroom spaces that will allow for the comfortable positioning for many students with CP. In this context, it could be seen that within the context of Nigerian schools, this becomes more than just a failure in design. It is a failure in understanding how the building as a space contributes to the teaching and learning of learners.

IV. EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE CASE STUDY

➤ Study Design and Context

The empirical material underpinning this article was collected through a convergent parallel mixed methods case study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018) design. A Nigerian private international school was selected purposefully as a case to investigate by the present article. It admitted students with and without CP to represent the private sector (Etikan et al, 2016) that had been much under-researched for its inclusive education practices compared with the public sector in Nigeria. The convergent parallel mixed methods data was collected via a questionnaire (response scale of five point Likert-type responses) responded to by 12 parents of learners with CP (overall accessibility mean $M = 3.27$, out of 5.00) while a semi-structured interview schedule with 10 teachers, managers and support staff at the school was subjected to reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

➤ Policy-Relevant Empirical Findings

There are three main findings of the empirical research which will be used to inform the policy analysis. Firstly, we observed a 'dual-track accessibility' at the site: state of the art, modern buildings designed as school facilities have approached the current standards whereas some old adapted dwellings have systematic obstacles for free movement. Accessibility as rated by the school principal scored 6/10, with modern buildings being near compliance, and legacy buildings being a major challenge.

This finding demonstrates the ineffectiveness of any site level or even institutional level analysis of accessibility if the heterogeneity within sites are ignored. Secondly, the staff interviewed mentioned several policy and practice disconnects: lack of adequate and specific technical assistance, lack of local level implementation enforcement mechanisms and financial problems related to the modification of legacy buildings:

Government policy is not comprehensive enough on the specifics of universal design. We know what we are supposed to do broadly, but there is no guidance on how to achieve it in buildings like ours. (Facilities Officer, A9)

This scenario suggests a fundamental disconnect between legislative intent and practical operation – one where technical standardization could bridge the gap. Third, participants repeatedly spoke of reliance on human support to negotiate infrastructure which was beyond users' reach – something a headmaster termed 'the adjustment'. The school had seen security guards working as 'human lifts', nursing staff dealing with a stream of students developing urine infections as they actively tried not to use their sanitation facilities, and teachers uprooting entire class lists to ground-floor venues for one child in their charge who has cerebral palsy. Though admirable in intention, these acts of human generosity represent the systemic replacement of human goodwill with designed access – both a moral issue and an operationally unrealistic substitute for accessibility.

➤ The Rhetoric–Reality Gap in Institutional Practice

Table 2 contrasts the school's expressed commitments to inclusion with the documented physical realities, illustrating the rhetoric–reality gap at the institutional level.

Table 2 Inclusive Education Rhetoric versus Physical Reality at the Case Study Institution

Expressed Commitment	Physical Reality	Theoretical Interpretation
'We are an inclusive school in heart and mind.' (Boarding staff, A5)	Legacy buildings with inaccessible stairs, narrow corridors, and limited accessible sanitation ($M = 3.08$)	Social model: inaccessible design constitutes structural discrimination regardless of institutional intent
'We follow British compliance standards.' (Principal, A1)	Overall campus rating: 6/10; older blocks non-compliant; no accessible route to second-floor labs	UDL: macro-accessibility (entry ramps) insufficient without micro-accessibility across all learning spaces
'We have a buddy system to support students.' (SENCO, T2)	Human assistance deployed as systematic substitute for accessible design; learners carried up stairs	Third teacher: environment 'teaches' peripheral status when structural access depends on individual goodwill
'School management maintains accessibility features.' (Parent survey, $M = 3.50$)	Maintenance limited to existing features; retrofitting of legacy buildings blocked by cost and structural constraints	Policy gap: legislative compliance without financial instruments to enable retrofitting

V. MECHANISMS SUSTAINING THE COMPLIANCE GAP

Based on the theory and empirical data, the following five mechanisms are arguably key in accounting for the continued gap in compliance within Nigerian inclusive school infrastructure: It is important to grasp these mechanisms when developing reform initiatives, as they can help address the root cause rather than the symptoms.

➤ *The Enforcement Deficit*

The simplest mechanism that perpetuates the compliance gap is a lack of effective enforcement. Although Nigeria's 2018 Disability Act designates the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities as a watchdog responsible for observing and enforcing compliance, there is evidence on the ground that the Commission does not possess the resources, personnel, or political will for regular inspections of private schools (Adewumi and Mosito 2019). Absent inspections and penalties, compliance is largely a choice; there is simply not much that encourages school operators to comply voluntarily, as investments in accessibility represent an added cost without associated financial or market benefits. The structural incentives for compliance are further flattened by the political economy of Nigeria's private schooling market where schools have significant freedom and where parents' criteria for choosing among institutions prioritize such factors as academic achievement, facility niceness and reputation, and safety rather than disability accessibility.

➤ *The Technical Guidance Vacuum*

The second cause is the lack of specific context-based technical guidance for implementing the legislation in the 2018 Disability Act in the form of architectural standards. The law calls for the accommodation of people with disabilities, but does not stipulate specific technical guidelines for evaluating adherence; this leaves principals, architects and building administrators ill-equipped to apply the broad term 'accommodated' to a converted residential home in an urban Nigeria. This problem is of even greater significance to children with CP who require a wider set of features than those which serve to define 'accommodated' in the informal language of Nigerian institutional buildings.

➤ *Financial Constraints and the Retrofitting Challenge*

A third mechanism through which the structural constraints of retrofitting existing school premises can have a financial dimension. As highlighted by the case study principal, it is generally more costly to retrofit existing buildings than it is to construct accessibility-friendly buildings in the first place—a constraint which may be acute for institutions that use, or are housed in former residences not intended to serve as schools. Where there are no specific government funded provisions, concessions or incentives such as tax breaks for the purchase of accessible property and for accessibility retrofits, private schools have a dilemma: conform to the legislation and potentially face astronomical costs or fail to comply and face essentially no risk or penalties.

In their study of infrastructure in the global school system, Barrett et al. (2019) show there to be consistently high rates of return in education outcomes from school infrastructure spending—but since these benefits cannot generally be internalised by schools they constitute an externality that requires public provision. Thus there are grounds for public financing of school accessibility retrofits on both grounds of justice (as it concerns fundamental rights) and based on economic efficiency.

➤ *The Conceptual Conflation of Social and Structural Inclusion*

A fourth and more insidious mechanism of inclusive institutions is the inherent tendency to blend social and structural inclusion, within institution-based discourses and metrics of inclusivity and quality assurance processes. If school stakeholders perceive positive peer interactions to be abundant (as in the case study: $M=3.92$) and have positive overall impressions of the school's inclusive culture, then these perceptions may become evidence of completed structural inclusion, obscuring the continued existence of an exclusionary built environment – a process which Thomas (2007) notes as an on-going phenomenon in disability studies. A second pedagogical and conceptual implication is that common methods of evaluating inclusive quality (parent-based questionnaires in Nigerian school contexts) implicitly over-state structural inclusion in its capacity to do so. This is because they capture user perceptions rather than objectively measure the functionality of a range of building components.

➤ *The 'Charity Model' of Institutional Practice*

The fifth reason is the existence of a 'charity model' of institutional practice which, according to disability scholars, directs institutional responses to disability towards individual support, acts of good will and 'extra effort', as opposed to the creation of accessible structure and design. As is recorded in the case study, this 'charity model' is expressed through the establishment of peer support or 'buddy' systems, 'human lift' procedures, re-locating of classes and similar interventions, and all of these practices frame the student with a disability as the recipient of institutional philanthropy as opposed to the possessor of a right to a designed structure and service. In practice, this approach not only generates unrealistic pressure on individual teachers and other school staff but also generates fragile, unpredictable systems of access that rely on the physical availability of certain people and, further to that, removes the necessity of structural intervention and investment on the part of the institution. As documented in the case study, the "emotional labour" of individual staff members in the face of the humiliation experienced by students due to the poor standard of the toilets, or in physically carrying a student through the building during an evacuation, is the human cost of the charity model.

VI. THE POST-TRANSITION INCLUSIVE INFRASTRUCTURE FRAMEWORK (PTIIF)

Given the mechanisms explored above, the PTIIF (Post-Transition Inclusive Infrastructure Framework) developed here provides a broad, multi-pillar reform framework that aims to address the compliance gap within Nigerian inclusive

school infrastructure. Built on a foundation of social model of disability and universal design for learning, informed by evidence from the case study and the surrounding literature and organized into four main pillars, it is laid out below in

Table 3: Legislative enforcement, Technical standardization, Financial enablement, and Accountability and Culture Change.

Table 3 The Post-Transition Inclusive Infrastructure Framework (PTIIF): Pillars, Components, and Actions

Pillar	Problem Addressed	Key Components	Responsible Actors
1. Legislative Enforcement	Enforcement deficit; compliance vacuum post-2024	Mandatory biennial accessibility inspections of all schools; enforceable sanctions for non-compliance; appeals process for phased compliance plans; National Commission for Persons with Disabilities (NCPD) capacity strengthening	NCPD; State Education Ministries; Federal Ministry of Education
2. Technical Standardisation	Technical guidance vacuum; macro-accessibility conflated with substantive access	Context-specific Nigerian School Accessibility Standards, covering: micro-architectural features for CP and other disabilities; retrofit guidance for converted residential buildings; seasonal and terrain-specific outdoor accessibility; alignment with ISO 21542:2021	NCPD; Standards Organisation of Nigeria; Urban and Regional Planning Authority
3. Financial Enablement	Financial barriers to retrofitting; market failure in accessibility investment	Dedicated federal accessibility retrofitting fund; tax incentives (relief or credits) for private school accessibility investments; concessionary lending through development finance institutions; prioritised public school capital grants	Federal Ministry of Finance; Federal Ministry of Education; Central Bank of Nigeria; Development Finance Institutions
4. Accountability and Culture Change	Charity model; conflation of social and structural inclusion; absence of disability-competent leadership	Mandatory disability inclusion modules in teacher education curricula; school self-assessment frameworks distinguishing social from structural inclusion; public accessibility ratings for schools; parent and disabled persons' organisation representation on school governance bodies	National Universities Commission; National Board for Technical Education; School Management; Civil Society

➤ Pillar 1: Legislative Enforcement

The top priority should be the implementation of credible enforcement of the 2018 Disability Act across the private education sector. This means, at a minimum, a programme of regular compliance audits of private institutions by adequately resourced state-level education authorities in conjunction with the National Commission for Persons with Disabilities, using agreed audit checklists which measures macro-level accessibility (entrances, ramps and lifts) as well as micro-level accessibility (access to and around interior space, furniture, lavatories, and outdoor spaces), to be implemented on a bi-annual basis in order to monitor improvements. Effective enforcement hinges not just on the powers to sanction but the readiness to exercise those powers in an effective manner. A graduated sanction regime should exist ranging from notices of compliance, to fines, to the suspension of an institution's licence, for ongoing and continued non-compliance which should give institutions real incentive to act, but, at the same time, should also have facilitation measures such as clear guidance on required works in notice of compliance, technical standards to reference, and access to finance instruments as per Pillar 3.

➤ Pillar 2: Technical Standardisation

In the absence of clear, context-specific technical standards, the compliance gap cannot be filled through enforcement alone. Nigeria needs a distinct Nigerian School Accessibility Standard to operationalise the broad mandate

for accessibility under the 2018 Disability Act and make concrete requirements on what constitutes accessible school construction and adaptation. This standard needs to be produced in close collaboration with DPOs, school architects, builders and disability consultants and should be revised over time as evidence evolves on what works.

Specific guidance needs to be developed around retrofitting of residential buildings in the educational sector, a technically difficult, but a frequent occurrence in Nigeria's private schooling environment.

ISO 21542:2021 (International Organization for Standardization, 2021) on accessibility and usability of the built environment can serve as an international precedent that needs to be contextualised for the Nigerian built environment and climate. It will be appropriate for it to specifically address the seasonal accessibility issues discussed in the case study such as the consequences of the rainy season on external walkways accessibility.

➤ Pillar 3: Financial Enablement

Most Important obstacle. Cost of accessibility retrofitting The main practical obstacles are the cost. Particularly the costs of private school owners running their schools in converted buildings.

There needs to be a specific federal school accessibility retrofitting fund managed and administered by state ministry of education that can provide finance to schools for the specific needs for retrofitting works in order to fulfil accessibilities.

Funds for retrofitting need to be paid when the accessibility plan has been submitted to a state designated body of experts who will check its viability or actual works are started by inspectors. There is need to have investment tax credits for the cost incurred in schools for accessibility purposes, in order to create economic incentives that the public interest and private schools' interests is going in the same direction. The us Americans with Disabilities Act tax credit, 26 U.S.C. 44. This approach could be modified according to the tax administration's capacity and to suit the Nigeria economic context.

➤ *Pillar 4: Accountability and Culture Change*

The problem is that structural reform of the built environment on its own cannot achieve these levels of compliance and that reform of the built environment must go hand-in-hand with structural change of the institutional cultures and practices underpinning the charity model of support. In Nigeria teacher education needs to require core courses in disability, the Social Model of Disability and UDL-based teaching, as well as UDL-based environmental design: the intention is to train teachers not just in the pedagogical skills for inclusive teaching, but in the conceptual and professional skills needed to 'read' structural accessibility, and to make bids for changes. Schools should redesign their self-assessment tools to make a clear distinction between measures of social inclusion (quality of interaction with peers, teacher attitude towards disability) and measures of structural inclusion (accessibilities of particular rooms). Such as distinction would overcome the conflation of measures found in the analysis section 5.4. Similar, to hygiene ratings in the food industry, public ratings on accessibility of schools could provide a market-led stimulus for the private sector schools to be more responsive.

VII. DISCUSSION: FROM SYMBOLIC TO SUBSTANTIVE INCLUSION

Symbolic inclusion-the provision of seemingly inclusive services that lack the enabling conditions-captures a common and pernicious feature of the Nigerian school landscape. It is observed in the school that provides a single ramp at its primary entrance while ensuring its laboratories, library and dining facility remain unreachable on upper levels; in the institution that appoints its security personnel as 'human lifts' while publicly styling itself as 'disability friendly'; and in the national policy that offers a five-year 'transition period' and then allows that period to expire with little or no follow-on consequences. Symbolic inclusion is neither an oversight nor an inefficiency; under the Social Model of Disability it constitutes a rights-infracture in that it systematically bars children and young people with disabilities from the equal participation they deserve, both under domestic and international law. True inclusion, on the other hand, necessitates what Ainscow (2020) has called 'the

removal of barriers to participation' through a co-ordinated and adequately resourced process of environmental adaptation in which accessibility is a mandatory rather than optional characteristic of the school environment. For children with CP a group the education of which arguably relies more heavily on access to the built environment than is the case for any other group-substantive inclusion demands nothing less than the entire suite of architectural and spatial adaptations: ramps, level changes, grabs, latched WC facilities, levers, adaptive furniture, accessible outside paths, in fact, the micro-architectural panoply of Universal Design.

The PTIIF set out here operates from the presumption that these are not merely aspirational 'ideals', but enforceable 'rights', and that bridging the compliance deficit in Nigerian inclusive school infrastructure is a both a matter of conscience and an imperative of quality education.

At the same time, it takes full account of the practical realities of reform in resource-scarce settings-including the need for sequences and priorities to be set, for finance to be provided and support to be given; for enforcement alone is insufficient and leads to 'compliance theatre'.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, we have contended that Nigeria's inclusive school infrastructure compliance gap is not the result of a mere lapse of institutional capacity or paucity of resources, but an articulation of five reinforcing structural constraints: the enforcement deficit, technical guidance vacuum, financial limitations to retrofit existing infrastructure, conflation of social and structural inclusion, and enduring support within a charitable framework of disability aid. The mechanisms that constitute this nexus of challenges are interlinked, such as the lack of enforcement provides little incentive for structural investment, the technical vacuum makes the notion of compliance obscure, while the culture of individual charity provides a convenient if flawed replacement to structural facilities. The response to the gap during the post-2024 period must be a holistic policy and implementation agenda, which, with the assistance of a coherent PTIIF model and four distinct pillars rooted in the Social Model of Disability, Universal Design for Learning and a contextual empirical framework, should strategically tackle both the physical dimensions of infrastructure compliance and its related structural and institutional issues, including stimulating institutional investment. Nigeria's transition from 2018, is certainly not a signpost to a concluded and accomplished period of inclusive infrastructure but instead marks the commencement of the next chapter of its inclusive policy, where the integrity of commitment to inclusive education can be rigorously measured against its physical landscape, and the prospect of hundreds of thousands of Nigerian children living with Cerebral Palsy gaining the real and most essential benefits of inclusive education from, not individual assistants, but inclusive structures.

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