# Report from Nigeria

# (Presented by Jean Obi)

The year 2016 marks 25 years since the *National Braille Council of Nigeria (Nabracon)* was launched, following the participation of Danlami Basharu (a blind lawyer) and Jean Obi (Coordinator of the Nigerwives Braille Book Production Centre) in the 1988 conference in London, the predecessor of ICEB. The purpose of attending the conference was to find ways of improving the availability and use of braille in Nigeria, particularly as it relates to the education of the blind. Certainly it has had a positive impact on the education of the blind and is still doing so.

We had to change the original name we operated under to *Braille Advancement Organisation of Nigeria* (BRAON) because the Corporate Affairs Commission refused to allow us the inclusion of the word *Council* in our name. It was eventually finally registered with the new name in June 2012.

The unstable security, political and economic situation over the past 5 years has seriously hampered activities of BRAON but we are determined to hold a workshop and General meeting of the association in August to celebrate 25 years of existence. The main producers of braille books use UEB so UEB reaches schools and tertiary institutions involved in visual impairment through the books they use. It has not though been formally accepted by government so the main activities to celebrate our 25 years are to gain acceptance for UEB in all the relevant educational institutions. A UEB handbook is being put together to cover the basic symbols required in the school and tertiary levels of education, based on the materials produced by ICEB.

Jean Obi attended the IDP event in Kampala and presented a paper at a group meeting on UEB but only a handful of people attended the group. She also produced braille and print copies of *Braille Usage*  that were distributed to the General Meeting. Prof. Paul Ajuwon of Missouri State University, who grew up in Nigeria, also presented a paper to the same group. She had hoped to interest other African countries in UEB but the interest was not there. We need to present a paper at a higher level of such events and have a display to encourage interaction, with a team to support it as do the technical providers. This would be far more effective. The third world countries badly need access to UEB.

Due to the present grave financial straits of Nigeria, we are unable to send a full delegation from Nigeria. We hope that by the next meeting we will be in a better situation to attend fully. Exco’s understanding and accommodation of the situation is much appreciated.

We greatly appreciate the support received from ICEB over the years and value our gains from interacting with the other member countries. Despite all the difficulties along the way, UEB is established in Nigeria. BRAON has a challenge to ensure that UEB reaches out to the braille educators, braille producers and braille end-users in all corners of Nigeria, equipping and enabling the blind to gain their optimum in their educational pursuits.

We look forward to a very successful AGM that enhances programmes already in progress and introduces new activities and decisions that further contribute to the independence of visually impaired persons as adults.

Jean Obi – President BRAON

May 20161