

UBEC Spends Over ₦100bn for Schools Upgrade, Teachers' Training

— Dr Aisha Garba

The Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) has announced major strides in Nigeria's basic education sector, revealing that more than ₦100 billion in previously untapped matching grants has been mobilized and channeled into school improvements across the country. UBEC Executive Secretary Dr Aisha Garba made the remarks at a media luncheon with education correspondents in Abuja. She said the commission's work is now guided by its 2025–2031 Strategic Blueprint and aligned with the Federal Government's Renewed Hope Agenda. According to her “We are moving beyond reforms to delivering measurable results,” she told reporters, outlining infrastructure, teacher development and digital learning initiatives reached by recent investments. Hajia Garba said the funds mobilized in partnership with state governments and the FCT are already producing visible results: over 4,600 new classrooms have been built, more than 6,100 classrooms renovated, 2,780 toilets provided, and 678 boreholes sunk. UBEC has also supplied upwards of 334,000 pieces of school furniture and supported the establishment of more than 2,300 Early Childhood Care Development and Education Centres, she added. Highlighting teacher development as central to lasting improvement, the Executive Secretary said UBEC has invested over ₦20.4 billion in professional development programmes. These investments underpin initiatives such as the Effective Schools Programme and stronger School-Based Management Committees, which aim to improve classroom practice, school leadership and accountability. Hajia Garba also emphasised UBEC's push for digital transformation in basic education. The commission is expanding Digital Literacy Centres, strengthening Smart Schools, and promoting training in artificial intelligence, coding and robotics to equip learners with future-ready skills.

In addition, UBEC has distributed more than 7.8 million instructional materials nationwide to support literacy, numeracy and foundational learning. The Executive Secretary said the commission's approach goes beyond bricks-and-mortar projects. UBEC is expanding access through Open Schooling, integrating Qur'anic and Tsangaya education, and running girl-child and inclusive education programmes. She said institutional reforms are being implemented to improve transparency, project monitoring and data-driven decision-making to ensure every investment delivers value for children. In her goodwill message, the Chairman of the Nigeria Union of

Journalists FCT Council Comrade Grace Ike while addressing the media's role, described journalists as vital partners who promote transparency, hold duty-bearers accountable and amplify successes and gaps in the education system. She stressed the need for reporters to engage regularly with UBEC through briefings, project visits and collaborative storytelling that captures both achievements and remaining challenges. Ike, stressed the need for timely data, access to schools, and capacity-building for education correspondents. She welcomed UBEC's commitment to open dialogue and urged stronger partnerships to improve the quality of education reporting.

“To strengthen this partnership UBEC can provide education correspondents: quarterly or biannual briefings and press kits, capacity-building workshops on interpreting education data

and child-friendly reporting, organized field visits to UBEC-funded projects” she added “Also collaborative awareness campaigns, greater transparency on projects and procurement, small investigative journalism grants, and feedback channels for journalists” She called on government, communities, teachers,

development partners and the media to work together to ensure every Nigerian child has access to safe, inclusive and quality basic education she said “Together,” she said, “we can ensure the story of every Nigerian child's right to quality basic education is told with accuracy, context and urgency. In his remarks the Chairman, Education Correspondents ECAN, Chux Ukwatu asked for deeper engagement with UBEC to include selected education correspondents on local field trips and project inspection visits outside Abuja so journalists can witness UBEC interventions firsthand; provide the logistical support that enables accurate reporting during official assignments; and make the Commission's activities more accessible so reporting can be fuller and fairer. Ukwatu's requests were framed as a partnership. “If journalists see projects on the ground their stories will better reflect successes and gaps alike, informing the public, improving scrutiny, and ultimately strengthening programs “he added. This stakeholder's collaboration is the first of its kind with UBEC after over nine years. Dr Aisha Garba is determined to change the narratives and correct anomalies in the sector to boost excess to quality universal Education in Nigeria This partnership has also gained momentum since Mr. Ikharo Attah, Special Adviser on Media and Communications to the Minister of Education, assumed office.

