COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A TWO-DAY CAPACITY BUILDING FOR COMMUNITY OBSERVERS, RESPONSE NETWORKS AND THE MEDIA ON EARLY WARNING AND EARLY RESPONSE, ORGANISED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC)/TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL IN NIGERIA (TI-NIGERIA) WITH SUPPORT FROM OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATION AFRICA (OSF-AFRICA) HELD AT HOTEL 17, KADUNA STATE ON 22ND AND 23RD AUGUST, 2023.

PREAMBLE:

CISLAC/TI-Nigeria with support from Open Society Foundation Africa (OSF-Africa) organised a two-day Capacity Building for Community Observers, Response Network and the Media on Early Warning and Early Response. The Workshop aimed at building the capacity of Community Observers, Response Network and the Media within the state for more collaboration, communication, coordination and collective support for early warning and conflict prediction mechanisms. There were Opening Remarks from the Executive Director of CISLAC/TI-Nigeria, Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani); Kaduna State Governor represented by Honourable Commissioner and Administrator of Kaduna Capital Territory Authority, Samuel Aruwan; Executive Vice Chairman, Kaduna State Peace Commission, Dr. Saleh Momale. The Workshop had some technical sessions with presentations titled: Guidance and Good Practices towards Effective Response to Early Warning Signals by Dr. Sunday Adejoh; Building Resilience in Communities through Effective Early Warning Systems by Anya Okeke; and The Role of the Media in Building Effective Early Warning and Early Response Mechanisms for Communities by Bonnet Emmanuel. It was attended by over 40 participants including Security Agencies, Community Observers, Civil Society and the media. After brainstorming exhaustively on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

1. As conflict fragility spreads rapidly across Nigeria, the criticality of multi-dimensional approach to internal security giving cognisance to Community participation and coordinated response has become imperative.

2. Early Warning is key in the provision of effective and timely information through conflict signal identification, outbreak anticipation and impact mitigation to aid proactive response by relevant authorities.
3. Inactive Legislative Constituency Offices across the country as a primary mechanism in Early signal detection and reporting contributes to major policy neglect in reporting system and structure.

4. The heavily placed reporting responsibility of Early Warning signals on response agencies backpedals active participation at individual and community levels, while posing a major barrier to timely and collective response.

5. Lack of transparency and accountability coupled with unattended mismanagement identified in the implementation of security votes at state levels has paved way for embezzlement that manifests in escalated conflict and threats to lives and property in various parts of the country.

6. Continued diversion of the allocated resources for enhancing Defence and Security services towards Early detection of signals, hampers efficient control of violence extremism and coordinated Response at all levels.

7. The unattended policy response to root causes of conflict and ethnic profiling of issues has resulted in unwarranted complications and generational agitations that amplify avertable conflict across the country.

8. Factual misrepresentation, sensationalised reportage and unverified information presentation by various media outfits trigger conflict insensitivity and violent response.

9. Proactive individual and policy actions in Early Warning remains irrelevant without Early Response, hence the need for adequate collaboration among response institutions for purposeful conflict management—preparedness, prevention and mitigation.

10. Inadequate funding for response institutions backed by political interest and interference hampers Early Response to reported signals by Community Observers.

11. The lingering inter-agency rivalry among security agencies constitutes an impediment to information sharing for coordinated Response.
12. Inadequate human and financial resources for Kaduna State Peace Commission hampers its operational efficiency and activities towards extensive public sensitisation, community engagement in Early Warning and Early Response.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. Strengthening Legislative Constituency offices across the country as a mechanism to enhance coordinated feedback and information gathering on Early Warning signals for timely and targeted response.

2. Embracing well-informed information gathering, factual presentation and publication as well as high-level professionalism in Early Warning reporting for timely response and purposeful development.

3. Encouraging transparency and accountability in the implementation of Defence and Security funds; and adequate funding for Kaduna State Peace Commission for efficient service delivery that positively impacts intelligence gathering on Early Warning signals and well-coordinated Response.

4. Context presentation in story development and integrated gender-lens into conflict reporting to ensure all-inclusiveness and sensitivity in response process.

5. Increasing policy focus and intervention on conflict sensitivity to address the root causes of conflict and lingering social agitations across the country.

6. In-depth conflict analysis by relevant stakeholders in Early Warning and Early Response to support coordinated response to emerging signals.

7. Adequate data collection and analysis through open-minded observation to objectively interrogate/analysis conflict signals for conflict sensitive reporting that elicits proactive Early Response.
8. Embracing best practices in Early Warning system through risk assessment, continuous monitoring of conflict signals, accurate data dissemination and communication, and coordinated response.

9. Mainstreaming gender-sensitivity in Early Warning and Early Response system with adequate consideration for youth and vulnerable groups integration in systematic planning and policy response to Early Warning.

10. Adequate resources allocation to response agencies to enhance operational efficiency in Early Warning system and response process.

11. Minimising the timeline in Early Warning information provision through adequate capacity development for analysis and verifiable presentation.

12. Leveraging the existing reporting system (including the web application: www.kspcewer.com.ng or 09062547287/09139382457 or mobile App – CEWER KADUNA or kspcalart@gmail.com) and structure institutionalised by Kaduna State Peace Commission in reporting of Early signals to elicit appropriate and coordinated response.

13. Maintaining balance-reporting through adoption of fundamental principles in conflict sensitive reporting like background exploration, all-inclusive information gathering/analysis, gender-sensitivity, objectivity and attentiveness to developments.

14. Drawing the line between fact and opinion in story development and analysis to ensure accurate reporting and information dissemination that positively shape public perception and understanding.

15. Ensuring information sensitivity and strict adherence to ethic code of conduct in journalism to prevent unwarranted provocation that exacerbates conflict.

16. Well-informed journalism through in-depth understating of the existing laws and government policies as well as internationally-aligned best practices and standards.
NEXT STEP/COMMITMENTS EXTRACTED:

- Secretary of Peace Commission will make effort to improve access to reporting channel and systems.
- Interfaith Mediation Centre to leverage upcoming project and enhance collaboration with Kaduna State Peace Commission as a key partner in its programmes and activities
- Kaduna State Peace Commission working to ensure coordination of Civil Society groups on EWER
- Nigeria Network of Peace Journalists will work to strengthen peace relationship with Niger Republic; and leverage International Peace Day to promote peace across schools in Kaduna
- Agwan Rimi Dialogue Forum will conduct a visit to District Head on issues of Early Warning; and cascade sensitisation at community level within two weeks
- Mercy Corps will focus on sustainability of existing structure at community level like community peace observers through collaboration with other partners; and formally handover the structures to the KSPC
- Ministry of Human Services and Social Development will support the peace process with its exiting human resources structured across LGs in the state.
- Beulah Future Leaders Foundation will enhance partnership with organisations to conduct sensitisation on EWER across selected communities
- NSCDC will amplify its community engagements to boost EWER through all the LGs in the state
- Hope for the Village Child Foundation will engage stepdown training for staff and leverage existing project to amplify public awareness on EWER.
- Kaduna State Vigilant Service will sustain partnership with relevant stakeholders for sustainable peace, while maintaining presence at KSPC EWER Situation Room.

Signed:

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2. **Emmanuel Shall**
   Mercy Corps

3. **Chat Sunday Adamu**
Global Peace Development