COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A TOWN HALL MEETING ON STRENGTHENING EXISTING MDGs COMMITTEE IN THE STATE ASSEMBLIES ORGANIZED BY THE CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) WITH SUPPORT FROM MAC ARTHUR FOUNDATION HELD AT NASSARAWA GUEST HOUSE, KANO ON 12th JUNE, 2014.

PREAMBLE:

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a one day Town Hall Meeting on Strengthening Existing MDGs committee in Kano State House of Assembly with support from Mac Arthur Foundation. The meeting drew about 20 participants from Kano State House of Assembly, civil society and the media. The meeting featured Mallam Dalhatu Yola and Chioma Blessing Kanu as the lead presenters and other discussants. After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

OBSERVATIONS:

1. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) presents Nigeria with opportunity for greater equity, prosperity and fulfillment in maternal and child health (i.e. Goal 4 and 5 of the MDGs); and Nigeria ranked among the countries facing a setback in the attainment of MDGs.
2. In Nigeria, effective implementation of the MDGs has been challenged by a number factors such as inadequate political will, lack of reliable and consistent baseline data, huge funding gaps, weak human capacity, bad governance, poor coordination among tiers of government, weak parliamentary engagement, and overlapping mandates between federal and state agencies on particular goal.
3. As part of its efforts to ensure timely attainment of MDGs, Nigerian government has structured implementation of MDGs into three major contexts including institutional, policy and financial frameworks.
4. As representatives of the people, the legislature remains the appropriate body to catalyse timely attainment of the MDGs.
5. Apart from the MDGs, in Nigeria, several developmental agenda have been introduced to accelerate development; however existing level of corruption has sabotaged developmental efforts.
6. While the responsibility to implementing and achieving MDGs lie not only with the executives, Kano State legislature holds essential position through effective oversight towards successful implementation and achievement of MDGs.
7. Nigeria contributes 2.3% of the world’s population and an alarming 10% of the global burden of Under 5 and Maternal Mortality Rate; and reports indicated that 40,000 maternal deaths occurred in 2013.
8. Inadequate media coverage and reportage of maternal mortality rate and Under 5 mortality especially in the grassroots across the State.

9. Inadequate infrastructural facilities; poor financial and political commitment by the executive and insufficient legislative oversight on maternal and child health.

10. Kano State is among the States facing challenges associated with delays in seeking, reaching and receiving emergency obstetric care, coupled with inadequate public enlightenment of Danger Signs, Safe Delivery Plan, Emergency Transport Scheme, Savings and blood donation.

11. Existing socio-cultural challenges, poverty, poor individual awareness, unethical attitudes of some health personnel have discouraged attendance at health facilities.

12. As part of its efforts to promote maternal health, Kano State Ministry of Health (SMOH) has partnered PATHS and other developmental partners to implement Increasing Access to Safe Motherhood Strategy between November 2005 and June 2008.

13. Kano State Government has established several Committees to supervise affairs of maternal health across the grassroots; however, poor awareness among the composition of Committees on maternal health related issues has posed a setback to achievement of effective maternal health in the grassroots.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Effective legislative oversight on MDGs through review of mandates of various Standing Committees related to MDGs.

2. Effective utilization of budgetary allocation to health sector, effective political commitment, good governance, review and strengthen legal and policy framework on maternal health.

3. Joint advocacy, monitoring, public hearings and sponsorship among various committees of Kano State House of Assembly on MDGs related legislations as well as joint executive-legislative working sessions.

4. Development of common strategies and plan of action across committees in the Kano State House of Assembly.

5. Strategic communication and sustained legislative physical presence in the relevant processes to drive timely achievement of MDGs within and outside the country.

6. Increased political focus towards health sector to enhance accessibility to maternal services and community awareness on Safe Motherhood Initiative.

7. Massive public enlightenment and knowledge sharing on Danger Signs, Safe Delivery Plan, Emergency Transport Scheme, Savings and blood donation for pregnant mothers.

8. Adequate structures and processes to promote functionality of Safe Motherhood Initiatives.
9. Proper individual orientation towards health services and strict compliance by health workers to medical code of ethics.
10. Constructive advocacy by civil society to hold policy makers accountable to their roles and responsibilities on maternal health.
11. Evidence-based, research-oriented, committed and investigative journalism to promote maternal health related matters in the State.
12. Well-informed individual, proper orientation and commitment towards maternal health services in the State.
13. Adequate training and retraining programmes for various Committees supervising maternal health services in the State.

CONCLUSION

The participants expressed their appreciation to CISLAC for convening the town hall meeting and to Mac Arthur Foundation for providing the support to this all important program channeled towards the realization of MDGs with special focus on maternal and child health as well as increased knowledge amongst stakeholders. The State Government strongly supports the initiative of promoting MDGs. Participants noted that the engagement was revealing and indeed an opportunity to begin to create bigger conversation amongst players on MDGs in Kano State. It was unanimously agreed that the engagement will set a priority for legislation against socio-cultural factors affecting maternal health in the State.

Signed:

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COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A TOWN HALL MEETING ON EDUCATING LEGISLATORS ON OVERSIGHT FUNCTION ON MATERNAL HEALTH ORGANISED BY THE CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) WITH SUPPORT FROM MAC ARTHUR FOUNDATION HELD AT NASSARAWA GUEST HOUSE, KANO ON 13TH JUNE, 2014.

PREAMBLE:

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a one day Town Hall Meeting on Educating Legislators on Oversight Function on Maternal Health with support from Mac Arthur Foundation. The meeting drew over 20 participants from Kano State House of Assembly, civil society and the media. The meeting featured Mallam Dalhatu Yola and Chioma Blessing Kanu as the lead presenters and other discussants. After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

OBSERVATIONS:

1. Legislature remains a key component in galvanizing efforts toward implementing and achieving MDGs and improving maternal health.
2. The need to improve awareness creation and knowledge sharing on the legislative oversight on MDGs and maternal health among relevant Committees.
3. Immediate need for action plan to promote effective implementation and timely achievement of the MDGs and maternal health in Kano State.
4. Lack of provision for free MNCH in the existing Primary Health Care Law of Kano State.
5. Inadequate working equipment, personnel and facilities have threatened effective service delivery in some Primary Health Care centres across the State.
6. Inadequate understanding of maternal and child health issues has challenged effective functionality of the existing EMC groups in some local governments.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Workshop report writing to the management of Kano State House of Assembly to provide feedback and prompt the formation of MDGs caucus.
2. Awareness creation and increase knowledge by the House among relevant Special and Standing Committees in Kano State House of Assembly through effective capacity building to enhance legislative productivity as related to MDGs.
3. Prompt formation of MDGs caucus by the House to fast-track effective implementation of MDGs and increase coordination among the relevant committees on oversight functions.
4. Constructive effort by the Kano State House of Assembly Committee on Health to propose appropriate amendment of the Primary Health Care Management Law to provide for effective free MNCH.
5. Adequate working equipment, personnel, facilities and EOC services in all Primary Health Care Centres in the State through improved legislative oversight on the State Ministry of Health and Local Government.

6. Increased community involvement, donor interest and media advocacy on maternal and child health in the State.

CONCLUSION

The participants expressed their appreciation to CISLAC for convening the town hall meeting and to Mac Arthur Foundation for providing the support to this all important program channeled towards the realization of MDGs with special focus on maternal and child health as well as increased knowledge amongst stakeholders. The State Government strongly continuous supports the initiative of promoting MDGs and maternal health. Participants further developed two different work plans to accelerate the effective implementation of MDGs and achieving maternal health in Kano State.

Signed:

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