COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF A ONE-DAY LEGISLATIVE AND MEDIA ROUNDTABLE ON MATERNAL HEALTH ACCOUNTABILITY ORGANIZED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, HELD AT MAKERA HOTEL, KATSINA STATE ON 28TH MAY, 2018.

PREAMBLE:
Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a One-day Legislative and Media Roundtable on Maternal Health Accountability. The meeting aimed at bringing Katsina state’s legislature and the media under one roof to brainstorm on challenges militating against adequate maternal health budgetary allocation and effective oversight function and proffer holistic way forward in 2019, giving congnisance to essential roles of the media in tracking, reporting and raising policy and public consciousness. The meeting drew participants representing the State House of Assembly, Civil Society Organizations, and the Media. After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

Observations:

1. While maternal and child health constitutes the fundamental objectives of democratic leadership, it as well remains a major legislative priority of the Katsina State House of Assembly.
2. The State House of Assembly sustains and encourages media involvement and participation in legislative process including deliberations on issues affecting maternal and child health.
3. The State House of Assembly is currently deliberating on amendment to the College of Nursing and Midwifery and College of Heath Science and Technology laws primarily to bridge human resource gaps for maternal and child health.
4. Adequate budgetary allocation to the health sector in the State is hampered by the present dwindling revenue allocation from Federation Account to the states and low State Internally Generated Revenue.
5. Weak social media engagement coupled with continuous shift in citizens’ interest from local to international media reportage restrict outreach and dissemination of maternal and child health reportage.
6. Legislature remains a key institution with significant constitutional power to address funding gaps in maternal health through appropriation process and oversight activities.
7. The existing open-door policy operates by the State House of Assembly strengthens effective legislature and media working relations.
8. Inadequate investigative journalism and reportage on maternal and child health related issues in the state.

Recommendations:
1. Efficient media coverage and reportage of maternal and child health issues to effectively raise public and policy consciousness on maternal health accountability.
2. Citizen inclusiveness in the Appropriation process to identify priorities in maternal health budgetary provision through rigorous community consultation by the media to ensure effective implementation.
3. Independent media reportage, agenda setting and investigative journalism to raise public and policy consciousness on maternal health accountability.
4. Active use of socio-media to enhance media reportage and audience interactivity on maternal health issues in the state.
5. Persistent budgetary performance review by legislature to drive appropriate improvement in maternal health budgetary provision in the state.
6. Translation of existing health care policies into legislation to promote accountability and sustainability in the healthcare service provision and delivery.
7. Harmonizing and integrating maternal and child health issues in submissions by various legislative Committees during the Appropriation process.

**Action points:**

1. Media to imbibe efficiency, professionalism and independency in coverage and reportage giving cognizance to social media to enhance audience interactivity.
2. House of Assembly to strengthen oversight on the line MDAs on maternal health to identify gaps and areas of improvement.

Signed:

1. **Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanajani)**
   Executive Director, CISLAC
2. **Comrade Muhammad Basir Usman**
   Katsina State Coalition of Civil Society
3. **Labaran Abubakar**
   Katsina State House of Assembly
4. **Binta Ahmed**
   Katsina State House of Assembly
5. **Buhari Ahmed Badi**
   Katsina State Radio Corporation