COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF A ONE-DAY EXECUTIVE AND MEDIA ROUNDTABLE ON MATERNAL HEALTH ACCOUNTABILITY ORGANIZED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, HELD AT DUTSE ROYAL HOTEL, JIGAWA STATE ON 3RD MAY, 2018.

PREAMBLE:
Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a One-day Executive and Media Roundtable on Maternal Health. The meeting aimed at bringing Jigawa state’s executives, civil society and the media under one roof to brainstorm on holistic policy action for timely release of maternal health budgetary and effective implementation, giving cognisance to essential roles of the media and civil society in tracking, reporting and raising policy and public consciousness. The meeting drew participants representing Ministries of Health, Budget and Planning, Women Affairs and Education, Civil Society Organizations, and the Media. After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

Observations:
1. Inadequate infrastructural facilities with existing overstretched healthcare system, especially by healthcare receivers from neighbouring states remain a contributory factor to maternal mortality and inaccessibility to medical facilities.
2. Existing capacity gaps among the executive arms delays release of the allocation for timely maternal and child health interventions.
3. Inadequate supervision of the existing medical facilities gives chances to unethical attitudes which exacerbate cases of maternal mortality.
4. Unethical attitudes by some health workers towards healthcare delivery backpedals the State Government’s efforts at providing adequate and accessible maternal and child healthcare services.
5. Continued shift in media attention and reportage from maternal health related issues paves way for inadequate individual awareness and education on maternal health in the State.
6. Inadequate collaboration among various Ministries, Departments and Agencies to define appropriate workability for operationalisation of the state’s health care programmes and policies continues to hamper efforts at achieving synergy in maternal healthcare interventions.
7. Inadequate creative and innovative media to support maternal and child health investigative journalism and documentaries on case studies as an advocacy tool to inform appropriate decision making.
8. Delayed domestication and implementation of relevant provisions in the National Health Act remains a major impediment to the provision of adequate, affordable and accessible healthcare.

Recommendations:
1. Appropriate inter-ministerial collaboration to define effective workability for operationalisation of the state’s health care programmes and policies to enhance synergy in maternal health interventions.
2. Efficient management and utilization of existing fund provision to the health sector to maximize effective maternal and child health care service delivery.
3. Adequate supervision of health care facilities by relevant authorities to restore proper code of conducts among health workers and encourage maternal attendance at health facilities.
4. Strengthening the existing established Community Health Committees to ensure adequate supervision and deliverable oversight of local health facilities.
5. Massive sensitization, public education and enlightenment by the media for positive attitude and proper orientation among women on maternal health issues.
6. Leveraging social media as a tool to amplify media reportage on maternal health related challenges.
7. Massive media reportage, coverage, research and capacity building on maternal health to hold policy makers accountable for maternal accountability in the State.
8. Creative and innovative media to support maternal and child health investigative journalism and documentaries on case studies as an advocacy tool in decision making.
9. Increased policy priority for infrastructural upgrade through the acquisition of modern equipment and replacement of obsolete ones with adequate and well-trained work force.

**Action points**

- Media to show more commitment and passion to drive advocacy and accountability in maternal and child health through enhance investigative journalism and reportage.
- Ministry of education to consider increasing girls enrolment into the state’s educational system as a strategy to reduce maternal and child deaths.
- Relevant Ministries, Department and Agencies to strengthen collaboration with the media in galvanizing awareness on maternal and child health.
- Media to strengthen collaboration with the MDAs and civil society groups to promote timely release and judicious utilization of budgetary allocation to maternal and child health.

**Signed:**

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