COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A TWO-DAY SUMMIT FOR STATE POLICY MAKERS ON FINANCING NUTRITION IN NORTHERN NIGERIA ORGANIZED BY THE FEDERAL MINISTRY OF BUDGET AND NATIONAL PLANNING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) AND UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN’S FUND (UNICEF) WITH SUPPORT FROM UKAID AND CHILDREN’S INVESTMENT FUND FOUNDATION OF UK HELD AT TAHIR GUEST PALACE, G.R.A KANO STATE ON 24TH AND 25TH NOVEMBER, 2016.

Preamble

The Federal Ministry of Budget and National Planning in partnership with Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) and United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) organized a two-day Summit for State Policy Makers on Financing Nutrition in Northern Nigeria. The Summit aimed at bringing the States legislators and high level policy makers from various states under one roof to: understand the complexity and multi-sectoral nature of nutrition; identify opportunities for financing nutrition in the 2017 budget in their respective states, understand existing efforts by the States towards sustainably increasing nutrition investment including nutrition emergency in Northern Nigeria. The meeting drew over 70 leaders from State Houses of Assembly, States Ministries of Health, Budget and Economic Planning, State Executive Secretaries, Federal Ministry of Budget and National Planning, Federal Ministry of Health, civil society groups and the media.

The Summit was attended by Members of the State Houses of Assembly such as Gombe State Chairman House Committee on Health, Hon. Bature G. Usman; Gombe State Chairman House Committee on Finance, Hon. Adamu J. Saidu; Chairman Katsina State House Committee on Health, Hon. Abubakar Mohammed; Yobe State Chairman House Committee on Appropriation, Hon. Bukar Mustapha; Chairman Yobe State House Committee on Health, Hon. Ya’u Usman Dachia; Chairman Kaduna State House Committee on Health, Hon. Dr. Baal Z. Auta; Chairman Kaduna State House Committee on Appropriation and Implementation, Hon. Ahmed Mohammed; Chairman Kano State House Committee on Budget, Rt. Hon. Abdul G. Azeez; Deputy Chairman Bauchi State House Committee on Health, Hon. Sale A. Umar; Deputy Chairman Bauchi State House Committee on Appropriation, Hon. Abdullahi S. Abdulkadir; Chairman Sokoto State House Committee on Finance and Appropriation, Hon. Malami Ahmed Mohammed, Sokoto State Chairman House Committee on Health, Hon. Bature B. Muhammad.

The Summit was also attended by members of the States’ Executives; Kano State Honourable Commissioner for Health, Dr. Kabiru I. Getso; Jigawa State Honourable Commissioner for Health, Dr. Abba Z. Umar; Kebbi State Honourable Commissioner for Health, Umar Usman Kambaza; Yobe State Honourable Commissioner for Budget and Planning, Mr. Idi Barde Gubana; Yobe State Honourable Commissioner for Health, Dr. M.B. Kawuwa; Economic Adviser to the Kaduna State Governor, Alhaji Murtala M. Dabo; Special Adviser to the Bauchi State Governor on Donors and NGOs, Alhaji Mansur Manu Soro;
After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

Observations:

1. Malnutrition impacts negatively on the socio-economic development of a nation, and sustainable growth in Northern Nigeria cannot be achieved without prioritised attention to nutrition investment at all levels.

2. Undernutrition remains high in Northern Nigeria with about 2.2 million out of the 2.5 million severely acute malnourished children being from Northern Nigeria. Majority of children do not receive minimum acceptable diet. While 50% child mortality in the country has malnutrition as underlining cause, no fewer than 1200, out of 2600 estimated daily deaths are caused by malnutrition.

3. Delay in domestication and implementation of the existing national policy guidelines on nutrition such as the National Policy on Food and Nutrition and the National Strategic Plan of Action for Nutrition by the States, hampers efforts to addressing nutrition through a multi-sectoral approach by the relevant sectors including health, education, agriculture, water and sanitation, social protection, among others.

4. Inadequate budgetary allocation to nutrition and delay or non-release of nutrition appropriated funds by the state governments are inherent systemic challenges in complementing donors’ efforts in scaling up interventions in nutrition.

5. Having visited treatment site for children with severe acute malnutrition to observe the severity of undernutrition in Northern Nigeria, we are deeply touched and worried that inadequate Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) across the States is a threat to saving lives of children with conditions of severe acute malnutrition, thus defeating the efforts in addressing childhood malnutrition and mortality.


7. Food insecurity, inappropriate feeding habits, poor awareness on acceptable adequate diet, insufficient health facilities and services are contributory factors to maternal and child malnutrition across the North.

Recommendations:

1. Prioritize malnutrition as a major health crisis in Northern Nigeria.
2. We commit working towards ensuring government provides funding for procurement of RUTF for CMAM continuation and scale-up in 2017 as well as encourage government to explore opportunities for local production of RUTF.

3. Consider nutrition as a multi-sectoral issue; develop and adopt multi-sectoral policies and implementable costed plans to address the high rates of malnutrition in Northern Nigeria.

4. Immediate release of funds for 2016 nutrition budget and put adequate funds in the 2017 states’ budgets to scale up nutrition interventions, giving consideration to adequate fund provision to maximize and leverage donor resources for treatment of severe acute malnourished children, scale up of infant and young child feeding practices and micronutrients deficiency.

5. Development of legal framework by the State Houses of Assembly to create ownership and institutionalize dedicated nutrition budget lines.

6. Prompt domestication and effective implementation of the National Policy for Food and Nutrition with functional support system and costed Nutrition Plan of Action by the States to provide guidelines and enhance planning for policy formulation towards maternal and child nutrition intervention and financing.

7. Encouraging appropriate and exclusive breastfeeding system through individual re-orientation, community participation and ownership, to address childhood malnutrition and combat childhood killer diseases at all levels.

8. Embracing local capacity in addressing malnutrition through diversification into agricultural sector to boost local remedies, enhanced financial support for Small-Scale farming and Small Scale Enterprises; and appropriate community mobilization, sensitization and awareness.

9. Mainstreaming well-funded nutrition components in the State Primary Health Care systems to ensure that minimum package of nutrition is institutionalized through policy transformation and service delivery.

10. Organize and arrange visits to CMAM sites for our respective colleagues (SHOA, Commissioners and Executives) to better understand the severity and complexity of the malnutrition crisis in our states.

11. Build synergy between the state legislative and executive arms on nutrition interventions

Signed:

1. **Umar Bakari**
   Special Adviser on Finance and Budget to Adamawa State Governor

2. **Adamu Muhammad Garun Gabas**
   Permanent Secretary, Jigawa State Ministry of Budget and Economic Planning

3. **Hon. Musa Sule Dutse**
   Member of Jigawa State House of Assembly

4. **Bello Gidado**
   Special Adviser on Budget and Planning to the Bauchi State Governor

5. **Yahuza Adamu**
Permanent Secretary, Bauchi State Planning Commission

6. **Hon. Abdullahi Sa’ad Abdulkadir**
   Deputy Majority Leader, Bauchi State House of Assembly

7. **Hon. Rabiu Musa**
   Member, Katsina State House Committee on Appropriation

8. **Hon. Nuhu Musa Tama**
   Member of Bauchi State House of Assembly

9. **Zayyanu Sayyadi**
   Secretary, Zamfara House Appropriation Committee

10. **Abubakar Wakili**
    Director, Gombe State Ministry of Economic and Planning

11. **Idi Barde Gubana**
    Yobe State Honourable Commissioner for Budget and Planning

12. **Alhaji Mansur Manu Soro**
    Special Adviser to the Bauchi State Governor on Donors and NGOs,

13. **Salisu U. Maraji**
    Director Admin & Finance, Kaduna State Ministry of Budget

14. **Hon. Ahmed Mohammed**
    Chairman, Kaduna State House Committee on Appropriation and Implementation

15. **Hon. Dr. Isaac Z. Auta**
    Member of Kaduna State House Committee on Health

16. **Murtala M. Dabo**
    Special Adviser on Economic to the Kaduna State Governor

17. **Umar Usman Kambaza**
    Kebbi State Commissioner for Health

18. **Hon. Bature G. Usman**
    Chairman Gombe State House Committee on Health & Human Service

19. **Mohammed M. Katanga**
    Secretary Jigawa State House Committee on Health

20. **Faruk Namalam**
    Director, Sokoto State Primary Health Care Development Agency

21. **Kubura Ahmad Bichi**
    Director of Planning and Research, Kano State Planning Commission

22. **Hon. Sule A.U**
    Member of Bauchi State House Committee on Health