DECLARATION OF ACTION AFTER A TWO-DAY NUTRITION BUDGET TRACKING WORKSHOP FOR 12 NORTHERN STATES OF NIGERIA ORGANISED 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) HELD AT GRAND CENTRAL HOTEL, KANO STATE ON 10TH AND 11TH MAY 2017

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 Budget Tracking Workshop for 12 northern states’ Policy Makers and Civil Society. The Workshop aimed at bringing the States Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Budget and Planning, Water Resources, Education, Women Affairs and Social Development and Primary Health Development Agencies with specific nutrition budget under one roof to: collate focused states nutrition budget data (2010-2016 financial year), share and agree on budget tracking methodology and tools to track and analyse nutrition budget allocation, releases and expenditure in state government ministries, departments and agencies and other stakeholders to inform policy and advocacy towards increasing funding to scale up nutrition interventions in the selected states.

The meeting drew over 70 participants from States Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Budget and Economic Planning, States Primary Health Care Development Agencies, Ministry of Budget and National Planning, Federal Ministry of Health, UNICEF Chiefs of Field Office Sokoto and Katsina, Civil Society Organisations and the Media. After exhaustive deliberation on various thematic issues, we the participants:

**Recognised** that proper nutrition, especially within the first 1000 days, provides a sound footing for a brighter start of life with greater potentials of attaining a healthier life, better educational outcomes, and improved productivity in adulthood leading to higher Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of countries

**Also recognised** that while adequate and sustainable funding for nutrition remains paramount to promote healthy and secured society, sustainable growth in the twelve Northern States that participated in this workshop cannot be achieved without prioritised attention to nutrition investment at all levels.

**Further recognised** that embracing multi-sectoral approach through adequate budgetary allocation to nutrition related activities in the line Ministries, Departments and Agencies will enhance concerted nutrition sensitive intervention as a delivery platform for nutrition specific intervention to address malnutrition scourge in the states.

**Expressed concern** over 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, that hampers efforts to addressing nutrition through a multi-sectoral approach.

Also expressed concern over inadequate Ready to Use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) across the States that further poses a threat to saving lives of children with conditions of Severe Acute Malnutrition, thus drawing back the efforts in addressing childhood malnutrition and mortality.

Noted that inadequate budgetary allocation to nutrition and delay or non-release of funds allocated for nutrition related activities by some state governments are inherent systemic challenges in complementing donors’ efforts in scaling up interventions in nutrition in view of the fact most of the current interventions are donor-driven which has serious implications for sustainability.

Also noted that timely release of funds for 2017 nutrition budget implementation will help to scale-up nutrition interventions and leverage donor resources for treatment of Severe Acute Malnutrition, scale up of infant and young child feeding practices and the control of micronutrients deficiency.

Affirmed that supporting domestication and effective implementation of the National Policy on Food and Nutrition with functional State Committee on Food and Nutrition as well as costed Nutrition Plan of Action by the States will provide guidelines and enhance planning for policy formulation towards maternal and child nutrition intervention and financing.

Committed to effectively deploy skills and knowledge gathered from this Workshop to inform evidence-based advocacy in tracking, monitoring and reporting nutrition budget for timely release and judicious utilisation of nutrition budgetary allocation to both nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific interventions in our respective states.

Also committed to work towards adequate budgetary allocation for the procurement of RUTF for Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) continuation and scale-up nutrition activities.

Further committed to leverage support from UNICEF to help states develop a budget tracking document to enhance appropriate tracking and monitoring process.

Will prioritize malnutrition as a major health and developmental challenges that is contributing to impeding socio-economic development of Northern Nigeria

Shall effectively strengthen collaboration among the line Ministries, Departments and Agencies, with specific focus on key developmental sectors and Local Government Authorities to project the nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific interventions

Resolved to work with Director of Planning with the support of UNICEF in our respective states to utilise the budget documents (2010-2016) to develop a substantive budget tracking document to inform policy decision.
Signed: