Preamble

The Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) in partnership with United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) organized a Roundtable Dialogue. The Dialogue aimed at bringing under one roof the state’s executive, legislature, CSOs and the media to identify opportunities for financing nutrition, understand existing efforts by the State towards increasing domestic investment for nutrition and addressing nutrition emergency, giving cognizance to the importance of timely release of funds for nutrition, increased domestic investment for the scale-up of CMAM, and increased budget line for nutrition in Jigawa state. After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

Observations:

1. While malnutrition constitutes a serious setback to socio-economic development of a nation, sustainable growth in Jigawa state cannot be achieved without prioritized attention to scale-up and sustain investment for nutrition.

2. An estimated 2.5 million Nigerian children under-5 suffer from Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) annually, exposing nearly 420,000 children under-5 to early death from common childhood illnesses such as diarrhoea, pneumonia and malaria.

3. Malnutrition and nutrition-related morbidity constitute serious public health concerns in Jigawa state with 15.5% exclusive breastfeeding rate (MICS, 2016).

4. Malnutrition by implications increases susceptibility to infection, slow recovery from illness, low quality breast milk; retards physical and cognitive development.

5. While in 2017, Jigawa State CMAM programmes admitted 62,953 with 57,201 cured, 170 death and 911 defaulters, consumption of RUTF varies along monthly admission rate.

6. Jigawa state records the worst nutrition indices in Nigeria with 66% stunting, 13.8% wasting, 50.4% underweight rates of under-5 as reports by MICS, 2016.

7. As part of the efforts to address malnutrition in the state, the State Ministry of Education has mainstreamed nutrition related subjects into the state’s Primary Education Curriculum.
8. In 2018 Appropriation Act, the state appropriated N350million for nutrition intervention which still awaiting release.

9. Inadequate synergy among the legislative, executive, CSOs and the media on nutrition data and information sharing.

10. In Jigawa state, in spite the legislative effort galvanizing additional funding for nutrition, nutrition funding suffers persistent neglect as a result of the delay in release.

11. While N150million was released in 2017 for the procurement of RUTF, the State presently records insufficient funds to sustain community nutrition initiative and inadequate manpower at facility levels.

Recommendations:

Participants recommended as follows:

1. Prioritizing adequate and sustainable nutrition investment in the state through scale-up of Community Management of Acute Malnutrition programmes, existing policies implementation, adequate budgetary allocation, timely release, cash backing and utilization of funds and oversight activities.

2. Embracing appropriate feeding habit through adequate consumption of local dietary and exclusive breastfeeding to addressing maternal and childhood malnutrition in the state.

3. Effective domestication and implementation of National Strategic Plan of Action on Nutrition by the executive arm of government across the country; and appropriate tracking and monitoring of budgetary allocation and utilisation on nutrition by civil society groups.

4. Increased focus on prevention such as Community-based approach such as Masaki Nutrition Project, while galvanizing curative effort towards addressing existing malnutrition status in the state.

5. Existing nutrition policy transition into legislation to enhance sustainable intervention and curb reported cases of policy summersault.

6. Enhanced investigative journalism to amplify public and policy awareness on timely release of nutrition funds for sustained intervention.

7. Expansion of CMAM programmes across all Local Government Areas for adequate coverage of local and neighboring communities’ needs.
8. Agenda-setting by the media through dedicated programmes and activities promoting adequate and sustainable nutrition investment in the state.

9. Proactive synergy among the civil society groups and the media to galvanize policy advocacy for the timely release of fund for nutrition interventions.

10. Appropriate multi-sectoral coordination among Ministries, Departments and Agencies, private sectors, CSOs and the media to advance adequate budgetary allocation and timely release of funds for nutrition intervention in the state.

Action points:

- CSOs and media to support Ministry of Health in galvanising advocacy to relevant ministries to create more synergy for prioritized allocation and release to nutrition
- Media to set agenda in persistent follow-up with relevant stakeholders to ensure timely release of fund for nutrition.
- The House to strengthen oversight on nutrition funding to ensure timely release and judicious utilization.
- Civil Society groups to intensify evidence-based advocacy through presentation of field-based and fact-findings to raise policy consciousness.
- Civil society to sustain advocacy to policy and legislative realms in the state.

Signed:

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