COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF A ONE-DAY LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE DIALOGUE ON ACTION FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICIES ON MATERNAL HEALTH ORGANIZED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, HELD AT ROYAL HOTEL, DUTSE JIGAWA STATE ON 27TH OCTOBER, 2016.

PREAMBLE:

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a One-day Legislative and Executive Dialogue on Action for Effective Implementation of Policies on Maternal Health. The Dialogue aims at bringing Jigwa State’s legislators, executive and civil society arms under one roof to brainstorm on necessary action for effective implementation and oversight of the existing policies and law on maternal and child health in the state. The meeting drew over 20 participants representing Jigawa State House of Assembly, State Primary Health Care Development Agency, Ministries of Budget and Economic Planning, Health, Education and Women Affairs, Civil Society Organizations, and the Media. After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

Observations:

1. With less than 6million population, Jigawa State records no fewer than 1500 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, in addition to non-documented maternal deaths in the State.

2. Inadequate health care workers, insufficient means of transportation, unethical attitudes by some health workers, and absence of health workers in some facilities are endemic challenges confronting accessibility and discouraging attendance at health facilities in Jigawa State.

3. The National Health Act 2014, if effectively domesticated and implemented in the State remains a reliable means to provide desirable health care systems to the citizens at all levels.

4. The Law establishing Jigawa State Primary Health Care Development Agency has been signed into law by the Governor to pave way for the Agency to access the 15% provision from the 1% Consolidate Revenue Fund for the provision and maintenance of Primary Health Care facilities, as enshrined under Section 11 (3)(c) of the National Health Act 2014.

5. While Jigawa State Government in 2009 created a separate budget line item for Free Maternal and Child Health services, the State’s Free Maternal and Child Health care Bill is presently awaiting passage into legislation.

6. Overstretched health care facilities and high patients-to-midwife ratio are contributing challenges to effective maternal and child health care service in Jigawa State.
Recommendations:

1. Appropriate monitoring and oversight on health care workers to ensure their full presence and total compliance to medical codes of conduct to restore confidence in women and improve attendance at health facilities in Jigawa state.
2. Provision of adequate means of transportation to mitigate challenges confronting emergency movement and accessibility to the health facilities.
3. Appropriate awareness and sensitization through constructive and evidence based advocacy by the State’s civil society and media to drive required policy and legislative interventions on the citizens’ maternal and child health care needs, especially in the grassroots.
4. Ensuring community participation in health care planning, provision of additional health workers and infrastructure development to complement efforts at combating maternal and child mortality in the State.
5. Infrastructural upgrade through the acquisition of modern equipment and replacement of obsolete ones with adequate and well-trained work force.
6. Building synergy among relevant stakeholders to provide legal mandate to the Free Maternal and Child Health services to promote sustainability.
7. Expanding the State’s Health Committee to incorporate traditional, community and religious leaders, media and civil society group to ensure encompassed interventions in maternal and child health.

Call to immediate action:

- Formation of Jigawa State Health Committee comprising the executives, legislators, media and civil society groups to ensure appropriate management, coordination and awareness of maternal and child health issues, especially in the grassroots.
- Showing commitment and passion to drive advocacy and accountability in maternal and child health in the State.
- Increasing enrolment into State’s educational system as a strategy to reduce maternal and child deaths, especially for girls.
- Introducing a lecturing program by civil society groups in collaboration with Ministries of Health and Education on maternal and child health in the State’s educational institutions.
- Prompt media engagement by executive, legislative and civil society groups to enhance awareness on maternal and child health.
- Improving women empowerment in the State to create self-reliant mothers and increase accessibility to maternal health.
- Reviewing the existing Safe-motherhood program in the State to address related inherent challenges.
- Creating “Health Talk Program” across health facilities as a Platform to persistently articulate the importance of maternal and child health.
Signed:

1. Dr. Sheu Sambo  
   Jigawa State Primary Health Care Development Agency
2. Mallam Ibrahim Adamu Umar  
   Jigawa State Director of Planning
3. Hajia Aishatu Idris  
   Jigawa State Ministry of Education
4. Mallam Dahiru Jikas  
   Jigawa State House of Assembly
5. Mallam Khalid Muhammad H.  
   Jigawa State Ministry of Women Affairs and Social Development
6. Comrade Musbahu Basirka  
   OCCEN
7. Mohammed Ahmed  
   Centre for Information Technology and Development (CITAD)
8. Mallam Yusuf Jafar  
   Jigawa State Civil Society Forum