COMMUNIQUÉ ISSUED AT THE END OF A ONE DAY CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON PUBLIC HEARING IN THE STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ORGANIZED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MAC ARTHUR FOUNDATION, HELD AT 3 STAR HOTEL, JIGAWA STATE ON THE 28th MAY, 2015.

PREAMBLE:
Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a One Day Civil Society Capacity Building Workshop on Public Hearing in the State House of Assembly. The meeting aimed at enhancing the capacity of Civil Society groups in Jigawa State with required practical skills and experience to independently engage policy and legislative process, especially on issues relating to Public Hearing in the State House of Assembly. The meeting drew about 20 participants from various Civil Society Organizations. The meeting featured Mallam Nura Maaji and Chioma Blessing Kanu as the lead presenters and other discussants. After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

OBSERVATION

1. Public Hearing is organized primarily to generate expert opinions on a legislation, ministerial questioning, and investigate a suspicious offensive actions or behaviour by an authority.
2. Jigawa State civil society groups are mainly invited to make input in the State’s Appropriation Bill and during investigative public hearing, but are excluded from other piece of legislation.
3. Memorandum remains a strategic document for civil society groups to effectively engage and contribute to legislative process in the State House of Assembly.
4. Executive dominance and influence over the State House of Assembly has delayed the passage of some specific legislation.
5. Civil Society groups can effectively participate in legislative processes at drafting, public hearing and harmonisation stages of legislation.
6. Persistent advocacy by civil society groups has resulted in the appointment of Civil Society Desk Officer at Jigawa State House of Assembly to strengthen the existing relationship.
7. Some civil society organizations in the State are yet to fully comprehend the fundamental roles and responsibilities of legislature as well as the technicalities involved in the development of memorandum.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants recommended the following:
1. Liaising with the State’s executives and developmental partners to build synergy and galvanise support towards the passage of specific legislation.

2. Improved information and communication between civil society and Civil Society Desk Officer in the State House of Assembly for timely update on issues affecting legislative and policy process.

3. Evidence-based advocacy by civil society to constructively engage legislative processes and create the necessary buy-in required to support legislative and policy processes.

4. Capacity of legislators built to understand their rights in order to function independently of the executives.

5. Proactive effort and curiosity by the State’s civil society groups to fully comprehend the functionality and technicality of legislative processes in the State House of Assembly.

6. Building synergy and Mustapha2ng positions by civil society to create formidable force for effective participation in Public Hearing.

CONCLUSION:

The participants expressed appreciation to CISLAC for embarking on the training and Mac Arthur Foundation for providing the support for the training organized to enhance the capacity of civil society groups in Jigawa state with required skills to engage policy and legislative processes. Participants further wished CISLAC could facilitate providing support for the Jigawa CSOs wishing to engage Public Hearing to enable them make inputs into the legislative processes.

Signed:

1. Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani), Executive Director, CISLAC
2. Mustapha Umar – Maternal and Newborn Child Advocacy Partners
3. Baffa Nayaya – Advocacy Nigeria
4. Hajia Fatima AbdulHafiz – Partnership for Transforming Education
5. Isah Mustapha – Project Monitoring Partnership
6. Fati Sule – Village Community Development Initiative