COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF ONE DAY CIVIL SOCIETY CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP ON PUBLIC HEARING IN THE KATSINA STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ORGANIZED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) WITH SUPPORT FROM MAC ARTHUR FOUNDATION HELD KATSINA MOTEL, KATSINA STATE ON 22ND APRIL, 2015.

PREAMBLE:

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized One Day Civil Society Capacity Building Workshop on Public Hearing in the Katsina State House of Assembly. The meeting aimed at enhancing the capacity of Civil Society groups in Katsina 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 over 20 participants from various Civil Society Organisations. 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:

OBSERVATIONS:

1. Public Hearing is organized to seek the inputs of relevant stakeholders including civil society into a proposed legislation on topical issues affecting the state or the citizens in general; or investigate suspicious offensive actions by an authority.
2. Presently, there exists an enabling platform for Civil Society participation in legislative process through collaboration with civil society officer in the Katsina State House of Assembly.
3. Large turnover of legislators in the Katsina State House of Assembly necessitated by the ongoing change in political atmosphere remains an anticipated major challenge to civil society legislative advocacy in the State.
4. Diverse political party between the past and present administrator; and absence of legislation to mandate the present government on continuity of programmes and policies initiated by past administration, threaten efforts by civil society to effectively engage legislative process.
5. Inadequate synergy between civil society and the media to advance course on civil society inclusiveness in legislative process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Participants recommended the following:

1. Prompt capacity building training by CISLAC for CSOs and incoming legislative committees in the Katsina State House of Assembly to familiarize them with importance of civil society involvement/participation in the State’s legislative process.
2. Well-informed and evidence-based advocacy by civil society groups in Katsina State to constructively engage and contribute to the State’s legislative process.
3. Advocacy visit by civil society group to the relevant committees in the State House of Assembly prior to the Public Hearing to familiarise the legislators with the views of civil society on proposed issues seeking legislation.

4. Mobilising, training and seeking the inputs of civil society groups to enrich a proposed memorandum or position to be submitted to relevant Committee at Public Hearing.

5. Canvassing for policy transformation into legislation to ensure sustainability; and maintaining high level of objectivity engaging policy and legislative process.

6. Partnering the media in galvanizing course for the inclusion of civil society views in proposed legislation.

CONCLUSION

The participants expressed their appreciation to CISLAC for embarking on the training and Mac Arthur Foundation for providing the support to the all-important training organized to enhancing the capacity of Civil Society groups in Katsina State with required practical skills and experience to independently engage policy and legislative process. Participants further expressed gratitude to the organizers, noting that the engagement was revealing and indeed an opportunity to begin to properly engage legislative process and advocate for effective legislation in the State.

Signed

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