CALL TO ACTION

A CALL TO ACTION PRESENTED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) AND INDICATED ACTION POINTS DURING ADVOCACY VISIT ON MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH TO LIBERTY RADIO AND TELEVISION, FREEDOM RADIO AND KADUNA STATE MEDIA CORPORATION IN KADUNA STATE ON 10TH AND 11TH MARCH, 2015.

Preamble

Since December 2013, Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) with support from MacArthur Foundation has been implementing series of activities in Kaduna State primarily to strengthen the capacity of relevant stakeholders—Legislature, Executives, Civil Society, and the Media in the State and interrogate issues around maternal and child health. Among such activities were CSOs-Legislative-Executive Roundtable on Maternal Health, Media Training for Legislative Reporters on Maternal Health and Town-Hall Meeting on Strengthening Existing MDGs Committee in the Kaduna State Assembly, Town-Hall Meeting on Understanding Legislative Oversight Function on Maternal Health organized between 11th - 12th and 21st - 22nd May 2014, respectively.

As part of the efforts to ensure relevant stakeholders are held accountable to their roles and responsibilities and take well-informed decisions in planning, policy formulation and domestication of National Health Act to provide for effective maternal and child health services in the State (as observed and recommended throughout the aforementioned engagements), CISLAC found it essential to further engage the media so as to sustain its existing tempo of advocacy. This primarily informed the decision by CISLAC to pay an advocacy visit to Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of Liberty Radio and Television, Freedom Radio and Kaduna State Media Corporation in Kaduna State on 10th and 11th March, 2015. During the visits, CISLAC made the following calls:

Call to Action to Kaduna State’s Legislature

- Workable collaboration among various stakeholders on health including members of the State House of Assembly, Executives, CSOs and Media to enable achievement on maternal health.
- Prompt domestication and implementation of the National Health Act by Kaduna State House of Assembly.
- Effective oversight of the State House of Assembly towards maternal and new born issues.
- Enhanced effort to build and sustain progress in human and women development particularly by the State House of Assembly.
• Increased oversight on budgetary allocation to social services with significant focus on maternal and child health.
• Proactive efforts by legislature, CSOs, media and various stakeholders to create well-informed citizens and violent-free society as a panacea for a sustainable delivery on maternal and child health.
• Development and implementation of robust legal framework on maternal and child health by the legislature; and increased legislative oversight to stem corrupt practices.
• Continuous training and retraining programmes to promote proactive legislature and enhance legislative capacity to identify developmental related issues affecting various committees.
• Strengthening working relationship among legislators, legislative aides and civil society in compliance to international standards on legislative practice.

Call to Action to Kaduna State’s Executives

• Adequate healthcare infrastructural facilities to restore human dignity, rights and provide accountability for maternal health; and massive recruitment of additional skilled health manpower.
• Effective implementation of the National Health Act for maximum benefit of the citizens.
• Adequate provision of medical facilities; judicious utilization of budgetary allocation to health sector; and full-fledged political commitment towards health care services in the state.
• Adequate supervision of various health facilities and Primary Healthcare Centres across the State.
• Focus attention of corporate social responsibility to support maternal health in the State; and enhanced government-private sector partnership to ensure effective delivery of existing facilities.
• Prompt efforts to boost human capital through enabling environment and enhance access to medical facilities.
• Adequate incentives to medical personnel, especially at grassroot level to discourage continuous migration of health workers from rural to urban areas.
• Adequate remuneration and rewards for civil servants to avert unnecessary administrative delay in delivery on maternal health.

Call to Action to Kaduna State’s Civil Society
• Massive advocacy for effective utilization of available resources, using Freedom of Information Act to engage relevant stakeholders, and encouraged self-sustained citizens in the State.
• Well-informed citizens with enhanced interest to properly understand and effectively utilize the national constitution in engaging policy makers and hold them accountable to their mandates.
• Committed efforts by communities in collaboration with legislature and other policy makers to demand accountability on the provision sustainable maternal health facilities.
• Good governance, independent and effective judiciary, people-oriented legislature and evidence based CSOs to achieve transparency and accountability health sector.

Call to Action to Kaduna State Media

• Aggressive and sustainable public sensitization and awareness programmes among the people, especially women on maternal health care.
• Increased focus on social media to drive health related reportage; and integration of the various media into a common platform.
• Effective media reportage, publicity and support on CSOs-Legislative related activities on maternal health as a catalyst to create well-informed society.
• Well-informed media reportage and investigative journalism on health related matters.
• Aggressive demand by the media for continuous political commitment, transparency and accountability in the health sector; and developmental journalism using the provision of Freedom of Information Act.
• Increased media and social media familiarity to budgetary advocacy and engagement on maternal health
• Continuous demand by the media from the State’s Executives for equipped Primary and Secondary health facilities to provide comprehensive medical attentions, especially at grassroots level.
• Enhanced synergy between legislature and the executive through joint sessions to promote coordination for sustainable budgetary allocations to key development sectors.

Action Points by CISLAC, the CEOs of Liberty Radio and Television, Freedom Radio and Kaduna State Media Corporation

After presentation of the Call for Action by CISLAC, the CEOs of Liberty Radio and Television, Freedom Radio and Kaduna State Media Corporation agreed as follows:
Established working collaboration with CISLAC to further enhance and sustain advocacy and sensitization towards maternal and child health in the state.

Agreed that Liberty Radio and Television, and Freedom Radio shall further intensify advocacy for the domestication of National Health Act and ensure well-informed citizens to effectively utilize the Act to demand accountability on maternal and child health.

Liberty Radio volunteered to provide CISLAC with enabling platform to further engage policy and legislation on maternal and child health, using existing programmes such as ‘Health Matter’, ‘Likita Liberty’ (in Hausa language), ‘Chiwom Harmodari’ (in Hausa language), ‘Following the Means’, ‘Frontline’ and one-off programme on issues and events.

Liberty Radio offered CISLAC with platform for persistent advocacy on adequate budgetary allocation and effective implementation on health by the State government, with special invitation to Executive Director of CISLAC to come up and open the discussion on Radio and Television Programme as related to policy and legislation on maternal and child health.

In order to effectively cement the new partnership, Liberty Radio and Television shall table all issues discussed and agreed before Chairman of Atar Communications Nigeria Limited (which comprises Liberty Radio and Television).

They declared readiness to support CISLAC and ensure the partnership intensified for the better interest of the public.

Kaduna State Media Corporation commended CISLAC for its commitment towards ensuring effective maternal and child health; and invited CISLAC to promptly utilize its existing programmes on health such as ‘Health is Wealth’ (English), ‘Lafiyan ka Jarinka’ (Hausa), ‘What’s Up’ (English), ‘Hantsi Health Segment’ on Tuesday and ‘Top of the Day Health Segment’ on Wednesday to further galvanize issues on maternal and child health in the state.

In fulfillment in part of their commitments, Freedom Radio instantly provided CISLAC with free 30 minutes radio airtime on Wednesday; Liberty Television, 30 minutes free appearance on Tuesday; and Kaduna State Media Corporation proposed free appearance in both radio and television to communicate and sensitize the stakeholders about its findings and recommendations from various engagements on maternal and child health so far in Kaduna State.