

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A RETREAT FOR SELECTED COMMITTEES IN KANO STATE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY ON THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF SEVERE ACUTE MALNUTRITION AS A CHILD RIGHT ORGANISED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) AT JIGAWA HOTEL, DUTSE, JIGAWA STATE ON 21ST FEBRUARY 2020.

Preamble

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a Retreat for relevant Committees in the Kano State House of Assembly on preventing and treating Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) as a child right. The Retreat aimed at enlightening members of relevant committees on SAM issues and how they can ensure that SAM is recognized as a human rights issue and prioritization of funding for the Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) and Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) through the appropriate legislative process. After deliberating exhaustively on various thematic issues, the following observations and recommendations were made:

Observations:

1. Globally, Nigeria remains second and the highest country in Africa with malnutrition related burden.
2. While malnutrition reduces the GDP of a nation by 8% (Horton and Steckel, 2013), Nigeria records the highest burden of malnutrition in Africa.
3. Malnutrition impedes physical growth and cognitive development of child with no fewer than 2.5million (UNICEF) children affected in Northern Nigeria.
4. Kano state has concluded work on the domestication of a costed 5-year State Policy on Food and Nutrition, presently awaiting budgetary releases and cash-backing.
5. Effort is currently on going for the local production of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) in Nigeria through the support of Federal Government, National Institute of Scientific Research and Development and development partners.
6. Kano State House of Assembly had in 2020 Appropriation allocated over 15% of the state's budget to health sector with increasing priority to nutrition intervention.
7. With the Universal Declaration of Human Right, Sustainable Development Goals (particularly Goal 2—Zero Hunger), Child Right Act and Constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria, adequate nutrition status constitutes a Child Right in Nigeria.
8. Delayed budgetary release and cash-backing is major challenge to sustainable nutrition intervention in the state.

Recommendations:

1. Immediate implementation of the State's domesticated National Policy on Food and Nutrition with holistic Strategic Plan of Action to guide the identification, design and implementation of nutrition intervention in the state.
2. Embracing coordinated multi-sectoral approach to financing nutrition through constructive synergy and integrated nutrition budgetary allocation and service delivery across the line Ministries, Departments and Agencies.
3. Reintroduction of legislative framework to domesticate the National Child Right Act for passage by Kano State House of Assembly to secure healthy and productive future of children with adequate nutrition status as a child right.
4. Encouraging local production of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic(RUTF) for sustainable cost-effective CMAM programs to enhance local procurement, storage facilities, and distribution as at when due to avert stagnant load of reported cases.
5. Proactive effort by the state towards sustainable procurement and dissemination of Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) to avert reported cases and the dreaded impact of stock-out in the state.
6. Prioritising immediate curative measures to address Severe Acute Malnutrition, while galvanizing preventive measures in the state.
7. Encouraging scale-up of Community Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) to yet-to-reach Local Government Areas in the state for adequate coverage and enhanced attendance in the state.
8. Increased synergy among the state's legislators, executive, community leaders, civil societies, and the media for proactive nutrition intervention, with feedback to the House and the Executive.

Action points:

- Members of the House committed to dedicate part of their constituency intervention for nutrition in their respective constituencies
- Member committed to prioritise representation and passage of Child Right Act.
- CSOs committed to enhance constructive working relationship with the State House of Assembly on sustainable nutrition intervention.
- Members committed to strengthen oversight on budgetary release.

Signed:

1. Hon. Salisu Ibrahim Mohammed
2. Hon. Ibrahim Isah Shanono
3. Hon. Umar Musa Sama
4. Hon. Abdullahi Iliyasu

5. Hon. Musa Ali Chachako
6. Hon. Nurudeen A. Ahmed