



Legislative Digest

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From right: Patrick Mutzenberg, Director of Centre for Civil and Political Rights (CCPR Switzerland); Rev. David Ugolor, Executive Director, ANEEJ Nigeria; Wendy Abbey, Human Rights Advocacy Centre, Ghana; Andre Afanou of Togo; and Abimbola Okoilu-Miro, Office Manager, CISLAC at recently concluded International Conference on "Improving the human rights dimension in the fight against corruption" held in Geneva, Switzerland.

'Nigeria Accounts For About 70% Of The Illegal Small Arms In West Africa' – Report

By Vaclav Prusa and Abubakar Jimoh

There are indications that West Africa is conveniently situated for drug and illegal weapons' trade between South America and Europe, and Nigeria

accounts for about 70% of the illegal small arms in the sub-region.

These hints are contained in 20-pages report titled 'CrimeJust: Fact Sheet Nigeria' published by Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) under the aegis of Criminal

Justice project supported by the European Union (EU) implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in partnership with INTERPOL and Transparency International.

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'We Don't Implement Constituency
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Why The Fight Against Corruption
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Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) is a non-governmental, non-profit, advocacy, information sharing, research, and capacity building organisation. Its mission is to strengthen the link between civil society and the legislature through advocacy and capacity building for civil society groups and policy makers on legislative processes and governance issues.

CISLAC was integrated as a corporate body (CAC/IT/NO22738) with the Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) on the 28th December 2006. Prior to this incorporation, however, CISLAC had actively been engaged in legislative advocacy work since 2005. The organisation is also compliant with the Anti-Money Laundering Act 2007. The Organisation reports to SCUML, any transaction that is above One thousand dollars, detailing the payee, purpose and the other KYC (Know Your Customer) requirements. This is done on a weekly or monthly basis depending on the volume of transactions and to ensure appropriate compliance with anti-money laundering laws. Also, CISLAC is registered organisation under the National Planning Commission.

As indicated above, the organisation emerged from the need to address the gaps in legislative advocacy work of civil society and government access to civil society groups. CISLAC's engagement with Federal Ministries, National and State Assemblies, Local Government Administrations, private sector interests, and non-government organisations, has opened a window through which the public and policy officials can interact and collaborate.

CISLAC through its engagement of the governance processes in Nigeria has facilitated the enactment of several primary legislations such as the Fiscal Responsibility Act, Public Procurement Act, and Nigeria Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative Act which promotes transparency and accountability in governance as well as the domestication of international conventions at the Federal and state levels in Nigeria. CISLAC also supported the passage of the Freedom of Information Act. Other pieces of legislations such as the National Tobacco Control Bill, National Health Bill, Disability Bill, Gender and Equal Opportunity Bill, Violence and Persons Prohibition Bill, Whistleblower Protection Bill, Prison Reform Bill, etc. are also supported by CISLAC.

As a renowned CSO in Legislative advocacy in the region, CISLAC has on several occasions shared its experience on best practises for legislative advocacy on invitation from its international partners such as the World Bank Parliamentary Forum and the United Nations Millennium Campaign in African countries such as Kenya and Zimbabwe. Similarly, Ghana, Kenya, and Democratic Republic of Congo have also requested support from CISLAC for replication of their work in Legislative advocacy. In many West African countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Cameroon, Niger, Togo and Benin Republic, CISLAC has carried out experience sharing and advocacy exercises on the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative processes through supporting the passage of extractive industry initiative laws in these countries. CISLAC has also undertaken capacity building for legislators, CSOs and Media on policy engagements in the above countries.

CISLAC's sub-granting experience includes grants to national organisations. With skilled, committed, experienced and proactive leadership and employees, particularly in the areas of coalition building, tenacious advocacy, community mobilization and the clout needed to engage lawmakers at all levels, the organization proven capacity to attract international solidarity, engage policy makers and mobilize local civil society groups and communities into action.

GOAL

To make government accessible, responsive and accountable to citizens.

VISION

A Nigeria where legislators and policy makers are safeguarding citizens' rights and welfare while citizens effectively demand accountability.

MISSION

To engage state and non-state actors for improved policy and legislative frameworks, transparency and accountability in governance for people oriented development.

ADVOCACY VISITS

CISLAC has successfully engaged key members of the National Assembly in order to wield their influence in ensuring that civil society positions are accommodated. In 2006, for instance, CISLAC targeted key players and created public awareness on draft legislation and questionable provisions incorporated by the National Assembly. Such efforts improved the levels of discipline, transparency, and accountability in the management and openness of fiscal responsibility, public procurement, and the nation's extractive Industry sector in Nigeria.

Through such efforts, CISLAC has empowered communities mostly affected by the extractive industry sector, improved the levels of information dissemination, and ensure due process and transparency in the payments made by extractive industry companies to the Federal Government and its agencies. It has also educated State and Federal legislators, their advisory staff, CSOs, the media, and key stakeholders on their oversight roles in legislation and has reviewed their commitment in implementation.

PUBLICATION OF MONTHLY NEWSLETTERS

CISLAC has strengthened civil society intervention by the publication of a monthly newsletter Legislative Digest and Tobacco Control Update which have been in circulation for both public and legislative consumption since October 2006 and June 2013 respectively. It has been a central medium of accountability, as it monitors the performance of Legislators, and a channel for advocacy on critical issues that need legislation. Also, CISLAC has a wide range of publications such as Textbooks and Policy Briefs.

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This is the policy-making organ of the organisation. It approves the budget of the organisation, provides contacts for operational funds and supports the operation of the secretariat.

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The New Tobacco Tax Regime

The Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) commends the much awaited development in the nation's tax regime with the recently approved amendment by President Muhammadu Buhari to the excise duty rates with tobacco constituting a major priority.

While we applaud the giant stride by the Federal Government, seeing it as one amongst many measures to discourage consumption of tobacco products and mitigate the devastating impacts—health, social and economic of tobacco use on the citizens and its growing burdens on limited and already overstretched public resources, we are not unaware of tactics of the Tobacco Industry globally who in their known fashion try to subvert such efforts by national governments.

We are delighted that the development is not only in line with the Government's commitment to safe and secure the lives of Nigerians but also the overarching recommendations made by the Tobacco Taxation Working Group as well as those of the Tariff Technical Committee (TCC) which are all in consonance with reports of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund Technical Assistance Mission on Nigeria's Fiscal Policy.

We find it worthy of a note that the upward review of excise duty rates for tobacco is also in consonance with various provisions and recommendations by the World Health Organisation (WHO) Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), an evidence-based treaty that reaffirms the right of all people to the highest standards of health.

While commending this move, we also call on the government to ensure that the minimal increase in greeted with sustained and systematic increases of taxes and the introduction of other price measures on tobacco products to put us at par with other African countries such as the Gambia, and South Africa who have results to show for the benefits of tobacco taxes.

As the realization that tobacco use and consumption not only impacts negatively on the overall public health of countries with the global Tobacco Control community advancing advocacy to isolate the Tobacco Industry, available empiric data and information on the efficacy of tax and price measures for Tobacco Control becomes a definite plausible way to go in the

country in contributing to protecting the lives of all Nigerians.

We are convinced that the development in addition to firstly contributing to the protection of the nation's overall public health interests and a reduction in the health hazards associated with tobacco-related diseases will also enhance the Government's fiscal revenues just as we sustain recorded gains on tobacco control in the country.

Considering other outstanding recommendations that are as well paramount to the implementation of the National Tobacco Control Act 2015, we reiterate the need to fast track the process to ratify Protocol to Eliminate Illicit Trade in Tobacco Products and adopt a tracking system in order to enhance revenue collection efficiency by preventing leakages and smuggling of tobacco products.

As the first meeting of the parties to the above mentioned Protocol has been scheduled to take place come July 2018, we fear that if Nigeria misses out of ratifying the protocol by June 2018, the country stands the risk of missing out of the maiden and all future meetings of parties to the protocol until ratifying same.

Such a trend will definitely serve as a clog in the wheel of successes recorded in Tobacco Control in Nigeria as the country as a major player in politics and economy on the continent cannot and must not be left out at such a fora which will then be dominated by countries outside of the African continent who have ratified the protocol.

We use this medium to call on all relevant government agencies including the Federal Ministry of Health, Federal Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to expedite action of the ratification process to enable the country participate at this all important meeting.

We also urge the government to as a matter of urgency operationalize the Tobacco Control Fund in line with Section 8 of the National Tobacco Control Act 2015 in order to fulfil the objectives of the NTC Act, aid the activities of the Tobacco Control Unit (TCU) and National Tobacco Control Committee (NATOCC).



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'Nigeria Accounts For About 70% Of The Illegal Small Arms In West Africa' – Report

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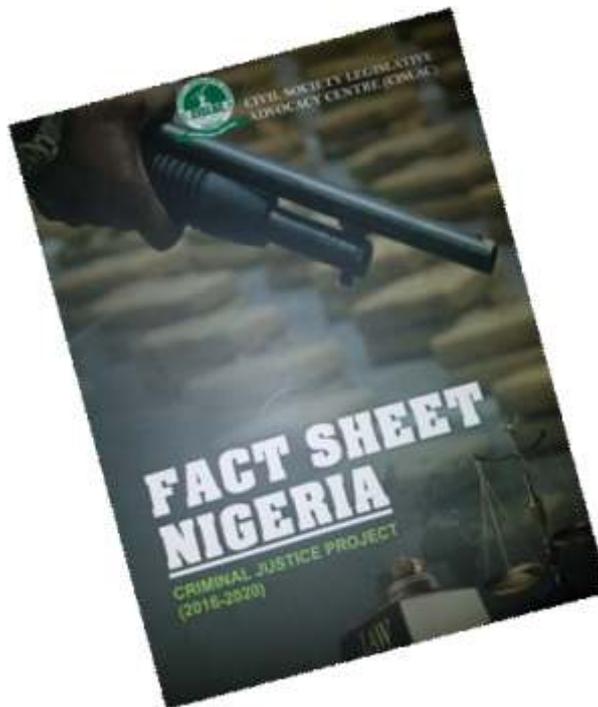
The report which aims at raising policy consciousness on the dreadful impacts of Organised Crime and enhancing the capacity of relevant authorities to effectively devise appropriate countermeasures reveals that Nigeria stands at the centre of a number of transnational crimes.

According to the report, the existing porous borders have not only paved ways for free flow of arms in and out of Nigeria but also contributed to increasing number of violent conflicts, constant human and drug trafficking which remain a challenge to authorities within and outside Nigeria.

The report observes that the broken political system, corrupt law enforcers and social environment are contributory challenges to many criminal activities as socially acceptable, thereby putting Nigeria at the epicentre of highly internationalised and organised crime. “The established linkage between the worst forms of criminality at an industrial scale and the political elite is widely observed and documented both in Nigeria and internationally.”

Narrating the networks in Organised Crime, the report traces drug trafficking and other serious crime to high public officials including the police and the army. “Political Exposed Persons and individuals within the Nigerian police and armed forces do not only assist criminal activities but also sometimes run illegal activities including drug and human trafficking and weapons smuggling.

“Drug trafficking, money laundering, arms manufacturing and arms trafficking, human trafficking, advance fee fraud, armed robbery and commercial kidnapping, piracy, pipeline vandalism and cybercrime are forms of organised crime with significant Nigerian involvement nationally and internationally.



“Allegations of corruption, heavy-handedness, and politicization have dogged the Nigeria Police Force,” it recounted.

The report discloses that drug trafficking remains a thriving business and serious issue with a global dimension of Nigerian involvement, noting that networking Nigerian gangs operate from Brazil and other South American countries though Europe and South East Asia

“*The report discloses that drug trafficking remains a thriving business and serious issue with a global dimension of Nigerian involvement...*”

with no fewer than 30% of the foreigners arrested across Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and Portugal were from West Africa, mostly Nigeria.

On human trafficking related crime, the report explains that vast and porous borders have exacerbated human trafficking routes from Nigeria through North African countries in the Sahara via the Mediterranean Sea to Europe.

“These vast borders have proven to be very difficult to control. The porosity of Nigeria’s borders has serious security implications for the country.

“With the porosity of Nigeria’s border, the security of Nigeria is threatened by the flow of arms, criminals, terrorists, drugs and thriving illegal human trafficking operations.

“Law enforcement agencies and security services are poorly organised, ineffective and, frequently, too corrupt to control the influx of drugs and other transnational crime to enter and exit Nigeria,” the report noted.

As related to reporting of abuses by security establishment, the report observes that frequent verbal and physical threats and repeated crackdown on whistle-blowers, journalists and activists persistently obstruct accessibility to public information increasing public disillusion about meaningful participation in governance.

The report further bemoans rivalry and overlapping roles amongst the law enforcement agencies with resultant poor coordination in the fight against Organised Crime, stating that the lingering inability of the agencies to exchange information and data results in incomplete evidence from prosecution in complex cases of organised crime, and poor conviction rate.

Senate Denounces Abuse Of FG's Fiscal Policies By Companies

The Senate Committee on Customs, Excise and Tariffs has condemned what it described as "gross abuse of government's fiscal policies" by some companies involved in importation.

Chairman of the committee, Sen. Hope Uzodinma, made the assertion while leading members of the committee on an oversight visit to Nigeria Customs Service, Zone A, Yaba, Lagos.

Reps Order Stoppage Of \$1.8 Billion Turn-around Maintenance Of Refineries

The House of Representatives has ordered the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) to stop the plan to expend \$1.8 billion on the turn-around maintenance (TAM) of the nation's four refineries.

The Chairman of the House adhoc committee, Mr. Garba Datti Mohammed, explained that this is to enable his committee conclude its work on the veracity of the TAM.

Mohammed who briefed journalists assured that the House is keen ? on proffering a lasting solution to the

Reps Endorses Council For Widows, Orphans

The House of Representatives Committee on Women Affairs endorsed the establishment of a National Council for Public Assistance to widows, dependent children and orphans in Nigeria.

This was resolved by the Committee at a public hearing on a Bill for an Act to Establish the National Council for Public Assistance to Widows, Dependants, Children and Orphans held at the National Assembly.

Chairman of the Committee, Hon.

Reps Move To Regulate Issuance Of Work Permit To Foreigners

The House of Representatives has adopted a report of its Committee on Interior seeking amendment to the Immigration Act, 2015 towards restricting the issuance of work permit to foreign expatriates in fields where Nigerian citizens have requisite knowledge and skills.

The adoption followed the consideration of the report by the House at its plenary session presided by the Deputy Speaker, Mr. Lasun Yussuff.

When signed by the President, the proposed will restrict Nigerian Immigration Service (NIS) from issuing work permit to foreign expatriates in fields where Nigerian citizens have requisite knowledge and skills.

The sponsor of the bill and Leader of

Uzodinma said that one of the policies abused by the companies was Automotive Industry Incentive for Importation of Completely Knocked Down (CKDs) and Semi-Knocked Down (SKDs) parts.

"We suspect that most of the imports coming in as CKDs or SKDs are fully built up items. It means that owners don't have necessary industrial acclaim

epileptic supply of petroleum products in the country, calling for the support of stakeholders in the petroleum industry.

He disclosed that the Minister of State, Petroleum resources, Dr. Ibe Kachikwu has been duly informed of the House position.

Mohammed noted that it was unfortunate that Nigerians have been subjected to suffer the harrowing problems associated with fuel scarcity despite the huge monies expended on the TAM of the nation's refineries over the years.

Princess Stella Ngwu assured the stakeholders present including the National Council for Women Societies, of the resolve of the Committee to pass the bill for the proposed council for elderly persons into law for the benefits of these senior citizens.

The sponsor of the bill, Hon. Enitan Dolapo Badru explained that the bill, if enacted into law, would criminalize financial, physical or biological abuse of an elderly person in the society.

the House, Femi Gbajabiamila, in a statement released yesterday by his media aide, Olanrewaju Smart in Abuja, said the adoption of the report by House, which coincided with Executive Order 5 on local content signed by President Muhammadu Buhari, would give legal strength to the intentions of the President.

"This Immigration Act, 2015 Amendment Bill I sponsored in July 2016 preceded the Executive Order made by President Muhammadu Buhari on similar matter on February 5, 2018 and will considerably provide legal teeth to ensure implementation of the presidential order beyond tenure of the current President," he said.

to couple the CKDs and government is losing a lot of money in some of those things," he said.

The chairman said that the committee was in the zone to assess allegations of fraudulent importation of some goods and services into the country.

"We will be on ground to assess what they have been claiming they are doing," he said, adding that this year's oversight programme was very expansive and different. This is why we have decided to come along with the Director, Technical Services of the Ministry of Finance who is in charge of various fiscal policies of government," Uzodinma said.

Senate Probes Alleged Secret Accounts By NNPC

The Nigerian Senate has mandated its Committee on Public Accounts to carry out a holistic investigation into secret bank accounts being allegedly operated by Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation.

The resolution followed a motion, "Urgent need to investigate NNPC, Nigerian Agip Oil Company IPP Security", by Sen. Dino Melaye representing Kogi West.

The Senate investigative committee is to conduct a detailed study of activities of the operation of the said accounts and report back within four (4) weeks.

Meanwhile, the panel is mandated particularly verify objectives of the account, signatories to the Account, whether it is known to the Federal Government, and the sources of fund.

In the motion, Sen. Melaye noted with serious concern the operation of an account by the NNPC/Agip Oil Company in defiance of federal government Treasury Single Account policy.

According to him, "the account" was "opened with the name NNPC/Nigerian Agip oil Company IPP Security account with address NNPC Garki, Herbert Macaulay Way is domiciled in First Bank Nigeria Plc with account number 2006367288".

He also observed that the opening balance was N31,704,807,979.2 with a closing balance of N34,423,738,086.4 as at 25th April, 2017.

Oyo Assembly Endorses State Police, Passes 2018 Budget

The Oyo State House of Assembly's members have expressed support for the creation of state police.

According to them, the state police has become imperative to adequately address the recurring security challenges in the country.

Hon. Olusegun Olaeleye representing Ibadan North I said that

the clamour for the creation of locally controlled police force had gained momentum and was in popular demand.

"We, as representatives of the people, cannot ignore something that has been endorsed by a majority of the people and we must take into account the views of people in tackling security challenges.

Lagos Assembly Passes Land Use Charge, Power Supply Bills Into Law

The Lagos State House of Assembly has passed into law land use charge and power supply bills during a recent plenary.

As related to electricity, the bill aims at improving electricity supply, power generation, distribution and evacuation through an embedded power scheme in Lagos State and the enforcement of consumer rights and obligation.

The Bill, which the House has since directed to the State Governor, Akinwumi Ambode for his ascent, will ensure the availability of a cost effective electric supply, and ensure collaboration with the Federal and state energy and electric power related agencies to promote and support investment in electric power projects within the state.

Also, the bill on land use charge entitled "A Bill for a law to provide for the consolidation of property and land based charges and make provisions for the levying and collection of land use charge in Lagos State and for connected

purposes" provides that each local government area in the state shall be the collecting authority and only body empowered to levy and collect tenement rates for its area of jurisdiction.

Land Use Charge, the law states, shall be payable in respect of property that is not exempted under Section 12 of the law.

Some of the properties exempted from the law include property owned and occupied by a religious body and used exclusively as a place of worship or religious education.

Also, exempted are public cemeteries and burial grounds as well as property used as a registered educational institution certified by the Commissioner to be non-profit making.

In addition, the law exempts any property specifically exempted by the Executive Governor by notice published in the State Official Gazette and all palaces of recognized Obas and Chiefs in the state.

"The creation of a state police is a popular demand and it is not surprising since security has become a major challenge in the country. The recurring challenges which have resulted in loss of lives and properties call for proactive measures and having a state police is a move in the right direction," he said.

On a separate development the House has passed the state's 2018 Appropriation Bill amounting to N271.57billion.

The passage followed the adoption of the reports and recommendations of the House Committee on Public Accounts, Finance and Appropriation, headed by Hon. Bolanle Agbaje.

The House presided over by the Speaker, Michael Adeyemo, unanimously consented to the passage of the bill, the House passed the bill after a clause by clause considerations and amendment proposed to the initial N267 billion budget presented by Governor Abiola Ajimobi on December 14, 2017.

The House approved N119.631 billion as the total recurrent expenditure and N149. 941 billion as the total capital expenditure for the year ending December 31, 2018.

Anti-human Trafficking Bill Scales Second Reading In Edo Assembly

The Bill for a law to prohibit trafficking in person and establishment of Edo State Task Force against trafficking in person has been passed second reading at the state House of Assembly.

Leading debate for the passage of the bill, the Majority Leader of the House, Hon. Roland Asoro representing Orhionmwon South said when passed it would address the problem associated with human trafficking.

Asoro said it would provide the legal framework to arrest and prosecute offenders, as well as rehabilitate and compensate victims.

Also, Hon. Iyoha Osaigbovo representing Oredo East added that with the high rate of Nigerians being killed and sold into slavery in Libya, passage of Bill has become imperative to nip the menace in the bud.

The Speaker, Hon. Kabiru Adjoto, thereafter, referred the bill to the house committee on women affairs

Ondo Assembly Passes 2018 Budget

The Ondo State House of Assembly passed the 2018 Appropriation Bill, raising the estimates from N171.2 billion to N181.4 billion.

The Bill was unanimously passed at a plenary session presided over by the Speaker, Rt. Hon. Bamidele Oleyelogun.

It would be recalled that Gov. Oluwarotimi Akeredolu had on Dec. 22,

2017 presented a budget of N171.2 billion to the House for consideration.

The House Committee on Finance and Appropriation chaired by Hon. Sunday Olajide explained that the increase was to accommodate N7billion SUBEB funds for capital projects in 2017 rolled into the 2018 budget.

Governor Bello Signs 2018 Budget Into Law

The Kogi State Governor, Alhaji Yahaya Bello has signed into law the 2018 Appropriation Bill, totalling N151.6 billion after it was passed into law by the State Assembly.

It was gathered that the signed budget represents an increase of about N3billion to the N147.8 billion budget proposals presented to the Assembly by the Governor on December 21, 2017.

Meanwhile, the signed budget also represents a reduction of over N23billion from the 2017 budget.

A statement signed by the director general on Media and Publicity to the state governor, Kingsley Fanwo said the budget contains personnel cost of N27.2 billion overhead cost, N36.7 billion; and capital expenditure of N87.6 billion.

Nassarawa State Assembly Passes Disability Bill Into Law

The Nasarawa State House of Assembly, had passed into law a bill for a law for the establishment of the state Disability Right Commission law 2018 in order to protect the rights of disable persons in the state.

The speaker of the state assembly, Ibrahim Balarabe Abdullahi, announced the passage of the bill when the majority leader of the house (Tanko Tunga-APC Awe North), moved a

motion for the passage of the bill during the house proceeding in Lafia.

According to the speaker, the commission if established, would give the physically challenged persons their full rights, as well as give them a sense of belonging in the interest of development.

Abdullahi, underscored the importance of commission to the wellbeing of the disabled persons in the

state and the need to pass the executive bill sent by Gov. Tanko Al-Makura.

According to him, "This bill is an executive bill sent to the house by Gov. Al-Makura as part of his government continued commitment to improve on the lives of the disabled persons in the state"

The importance of this commission to the development of the disabled persons cannot be over-emphasized, hence the need for the passage of the bill into law.

'He commended Gov. Tanko Almakura for initiating the bill and also thank his honourable colleagues for giving adequate attention to the bill"

The house passed the bill after the bill had gone through various legislative procedures and public hearing was conducted where stakeholders overwhelmingly supported the move by the governor to establish the commission.

Kwara Assembly Passes LG Autonomy Bill, Others

The Kwara State House of Assembly has formally passed a Bill to give Local Governments Financial Autonomy.

The Fourth Alteration No 5 Bill of 2017 seeks to abrogate the State Joint Local Government Account and empower each Local Government Council to maintain its own Special Account into which all allocations due to the Local Government Council would be paid from Federation Account.

The House also passed the Fourth Alteration No 6 Bill, 2017 which seeks to strengthen Local Government Administration and Fourth Alteration No 14 Bill of 2017 which seeks to provide for independent candidature in elections.

Speaking after the Committee of whole's consideration of the report of the House Committee on the Ethics, Privileges and Judiciary on Public hearing on the Bill, the Speaker, Dr. Ali Ahmad who presided over the plenary,

said the passage reflected the views presented by the people of the state at the Public Hearing.

On a related development, the House also passed into law a Bill seeking to allow for the suspension of payment of Pension to former Governors and their Deputies has been passed into law by the Kwara State House of Assembly.

The passage of the Bill into law was preceded by consideration of a report by the House earlier presented by the Chairman House Committee on Establishment and Public Service, Hon. Emmanuel Folorunsho Abodunrin.

The Deputy Speaker, Elder Matthew Okedare, who presided over the sitting, lauded Members for ensuring prompt passage of the bill, sponsored by a member representing Omupo Constituency, Hon. Mashood Bakare and directed the Clerk of the House Alhaji Ahmed Katsina Mohammed to prepare a clean copy for the Governor's assent.

Imo Passes Bill On Prohibition Of Street Begging, Hawking For Second Reading

The Imo State House of Assembly has a bill to prohibit street begging, hawking and purchase of goods on the road for second reading.

Sponsored by Hon. Ngozi Obiefule and 16 others, the bill aims at curbing the menace of street begging and hawking, checking the activities of hawkers and street traders, as well as restoring order.

The legislator said hawking and street trading would continue to be a threat to the state if left unchecked, adding that the activities were responsible for numerous road accidents.

She advocated that those who bought goods from hawkers and street traders should be penalised to deter others and urged other lawmakers to support the bill.

Supporting the bill, Mike Iheanetu said that the activities of hawkers and street traders had constituted a menace, adding that the proposed law would go a long way toward restoring sanity on the streets.

The bill was unanimously support after it was put to vote by the Speaker of the assembly, Mr Acho Ihim, who referred it to the House Committee on Market and directed the committee to report back to the House.

Rivers Assembly Assures Of Health Insurance Law

The Rivers House of Assembly has pledged its commitment to fast-tact the passage of a Bill that would enhance healthcare delivery in the state.

This commitment was made by the Speaker of the House, Hon. Ikuinyi Ibani at the opening session of a two-day high level training on enacting Rivers Health Insurance Scheme Legislation in Port Harcourt.

Ibani said that as part of the steps to support the United Nations' target of attaining Universal Health Coverage by 2030, the House would support robust policies and effective collaborations with relevant stakeholders in the health sector. He said, "Our direct collaboration with USAID at ensuring that the health insurance scheme is legally guided is an indication that that all members of our constituencies (individuals and communities) should

have access to quality health without suffering financial hardship."

The training aimed at giving legislators comprehensive knowledge about laws that could be of general application that will create positive impact in healthcare delivery.

On a related development, the House has a bill seeking to prescribing death penalty for cultism, armed robbery, kidnapping and light arms proliferation in Rivers is presently at the committee stage.

The Executive Bill seeks to amend an existing law that assigned 10 years imprisonment for cultism and related offences in the state.

Members of the House have expressed support for the amendment process, noting that death penalty was most suitable to discourage perpetrators of such crimes.

'Delay In LG Autonomy, A Setback To Policy Commitments On Basic Health Care' – Group

By Chioma Kanu

A group of state and non-state actors working on maternal health accountability has described the delay in the endorsement of local government autonomy in the country as an inherent challenge to effective functionality and service delivery by Primary Health Care system as enshrined under relevant provisions of the National Health Act, 2014.

It made this known in a communiqué issued at the end of 'Executive, Legislative, CSOs and Media Dialogue on Maternal Health Accountability' organized by CISLAC under the aegis of Macarthur project in Kano state.

According to the group, adequate, accessible and affordable Primary Health Care system at grassroots level has hitherto suffered serious policy neglect for lack of local government autonomy, lamenting absence of appropriate supervision, control and management of healthcare facilities by the government paving ways for abuses and unethical practices by some healthcare personnel.

It noted other contributory challenges to maternal health accountability to include: delay in the domestication and implementation of existing laws like Freedom of Information Act and Fiscal Responsibility Act hampering maternal health information transparency, accessibility and accountability in the state; inadequate public awareness on the disparity between private and public owned health care centres; lack of local CSOs advocacy to the State House of Assembly to provide guidance and direction to ensure compliance to legislative mandates; inadequate accessibility to budgetary information across MDAs; and untimely release of information by MDAs to the Budget and Planning Ministry to inform appropriate budgetary decision.

Commending the progress on maternal health intervention, the group observed that state has utilized its Save

One Million Lives fund from the World Bank in enhancing human resources for health, renovating 40 health facilities with proposed plan for 20 more, supporting referral system, providing and coordinating dissemination Family Planning commodities, conducting capacity building training on essential drugs administration, boosting quarterly Integrated Supportive Supervision of healthcare facilities.

"In 2018 Appropriation, the State Government has allocated 12.6% (out of 15% benchmark) of its total budget to the health sector.

"The State Government has allocated N100million in support of Foundation Year Programme to encourage enrolment into state's School of Nursing and Midwifery to fill human resources challenge bedeviling accessibility to maternal health services, especially in the grassroots.

"The Ministry of Budget and Planning has had bilateral discussions with implementing Ministries, Departments and Agencies to appropriately capture and provide for maternal health budget lines.

"Appreciable effort by local philanthropists in the provision of essential drugs to especially stock-out Primary Health Care facilities mentioned through media investigative reports; and increasing public and policy awareness and advocacy through the social media on maternal and child health related issues," the group noted.

As part of the opportunities observed to leverage in advancing maternal health accountability in the state, it lauded the formation of Milestone Prostone Committee to engage regular supervision and address misused of health facilities; emerging community mobilization by Ministry of Women Affairs to encourage enrolment for science courses in schools to absorb students for training under school of Nursing and Midwifery; existing legal framework before the House of Assembly to regulate Public-Private partnership in the privatization of state owned hospital for effective management; proposed sensitization

workshop by the Ministry of Budget and Planning for the MDAs on required procedures for funds accessibility and release.

Other opportunities noted include merging media support to maternal health through dedicated free programmes and activities; formation of a 6-man committee at state and local government levels on maternal death review within 48hours of occurrence; regular facilities visit by the state level maternal death review committee to provide guidance and supervision on prevention maternal health; regular review of maternal health related issues including maternal death by Kano Emirate Council on Health comprising traditional rulers with feedback generation to support appropriate policy decision; existence of developmental partners working on health and many health institutions; and increasing community readiness and curiosity to support and collaborate with local civil society and the media.

In order to strengthen maternal health accountability in Kano state, the group further recommended persistent CSOs advocacy to the MDAs to promote accessibility to maternal health budgetary information; synergy among Civil Society groups to harmonise advocacy demands, forestall unity and enhance sustainability; retraining programmes for healthcare workers to avert abuses and ensure strict compliance to medical code of conduct in maternal health service delivery; creation of a Committee by the State Ministry of Health will supervise usage of essential commodities across facilities to avert diversion; appropriate tracking and monitoring of the State's contributory health fund by civil society groups to ensure appropriate implementation.

The dialogue aimed at bringing Kano state's executive, legislators, CSOs and media under one roof to brainstorm on current trend, progress, opportunities and challenges on maternal healthcare service provision and delivery in the state.

2017 CPI: The Fiction and Reality in Nigeria

By Abubakar Jimoh

In spite of self-proclaimed measures deployed by the present administration in the on-going selective fight against corruption, Transparency International Secretariat in Germany recently took the 'bull by the horn' when it released the 2017 Corruption Perception Index (CPI) showing "Nigeria slipping further down in international ranking" with zero progress in the fight against corruption.

The CPI ranks Nigeria 146 out of 180 countries sampled in 2017 — dropping 12 positions against 2016. These results show a slight deterioration in the scoring of the perception about corruption in public administration compared to 2016. This shows that, as the rest of the world improved in the perception on corruption, Nigeria slips further down as the fight against corruption stagnates.

In the observations of Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC)—the National Contact of Transparency International, the fresh setback in the fight against corruption confirms that grand-corruption, political corruption, nepotism, favoritism and bribery persist in Nigeria at all levels.

As the most respected international measurement of corruption indices trends in discussions and debate across the media, there emerged two schools of thought—"Fictionists" and "Realists" even within the Presidency maintaining separate but interesting view on the CPI.

The Fictionists have subscribed to

live in denial or deception from glaring truth on virtually every constructive assessment and report on government's performance. They are economical not only with the truth but also in articulating the intrinsic challenges back-peddalling our socio-economic and political development with resultant legendary tardiness. Such is a case of Garba Shehu, spokesperson for President Buhari who promptly dismissed the most credible CPI with a political interpretation that it constituted merely a "fiction" sponsored by the administration's critics.

Of course, the Spokesperson is only repeating history and inherent trend in successive administrations' response to critical reports on government performance, as we once had Dr. Reuben Abati, Special Adviser on Media and Publicity and Dr. Doyin Okupe, Senior Special Assistant on Public Affairs to former President Goodluck Jonathan, who would stop at nothing in defending the Presidency and issuing condemnation to floor constructive reports, debates or fact-findings on former administration's performance.

However, for the realists, the Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo could not conceal but to summoned courage in embracing facts and figures, while recognising the report as a catalyst for Nigeria to do better in its fight against corruption rather than a setback.

While the growing culture of quick reaction and condemnation to fact-findings on socio-economic and political spheres in the country increasingly blindfolds especially the political class

from reasoning objectively to conclusively unlock potential benefits from such constructive presentations, it has become imperative to remind the Presidency that well-meaning citizens are fully aware of the various unfulfilled commitments including 2016 Anti-Corruption Summit in London, Open Government Partnership, campaign promise by the present administration to combat corruption in all ramifications without fear or favour.

Meanwhile, this piece will present in view of realists, some contributory failures to the deterioration of the public patience and perception about the ability to fight corruption in Nigeria.

It is disturbing that official corruption is deeply embedded and fast becoming a permanent fixture whose subculture melts seamlessly into the public servants' daily life. In 2016, a report by a global professional advisory firm, PricewaterhouseCoopers warned that corruption could cost Nigeria about 37 per cent of its Gross Domestic Product by 2030 if the situation is not addressed immediately. The report equates this amount to about \$1000 per person in 2014 and nearly \$2000 per person by 2030.

The spite of corrupt practices in the public sector remains a major impediment to service delivery and development success of this administration. Corruption is Nigeria's worst problem; it is responsible for all kinds of woes, such as election rigging, failed promises, abandoned projects, poor quality of implemented projects, dilapidated infrastructure, nepotism, instability in the Niger Delta, and impediment to flow of foreign direct investment.

Corruption in Nigeria's public sector features in acceptance of gratification; succumbing to inducement and undue influence; embezzlement; conflict of interests; procurement scam; unethical practices in the award of contracts by public office holders to cronies, family members, and personally held companies; bribery; fraud; nepotism and tribalism in recruitment/appointment, promotion; kickback on contract;



The spite of corrupt practices in the public sector remains a major impediment to service delivery and development success of this administration.



rigging of elections; misappropriation and conversion of public funds for personal gains; leaking tender information to friends and relations; diversion and misappropriation of funds through manipulation or falsification of financial records; payment for favourable judicial decisions, to mention few.

Indeed ghost workers phenomenon and budgeting corruption are fast-trending in the public sector. For instance, in 2016, the Federal Government payroll was through a notable initiative of the Federal Government, reportedly rid of 50,000 ghost workers, saving the country a huge sum amounting to N200 billion.

Budgeting corruption is another public sector systemic menace. As revealed by Nigerian Accounting Association, over 60 per cent of corruption issues in Nigeria are built and legalized in budget.

In a paper presented at the 1st National Policy Dialogue on strategies for improving service delivery in government parastatals, agencies and commissions organised by office of the secretary general for the federation on 27th march 2017, the Executive Director of CISLAC, Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani) warned that the effects of corruption in service delivery in Nigeria were outrageous. The effects, according to him range from under development, absence of basic infrastructure facilities such as potable water, good road networks, dilapidated health care facilities and degrading services, massive poverty, cluelessness in professionalism, deficient leadership outputs, high unemployment and youth hopelessness, falling standard of education leading to production of low-quality graduates.

In the health sector, continued

diversion of funds reduces the level of resources and investments available for the public health system. Resources are reportedly drained from health budget through embezzlement, fraud and corruption, reducing the funding available for salaries, health services and maintenance with resultant low staff motivation, poor quality of care and declining service availability and accessibility.

Nigeria's education sector has hitherto continued to suffer from continuous scourge of severe corruption and incompetence which metamorphose in mismanagement of educational funds, leading to ill-equipped laboratory, library, and classrooms; embezzlement of education budgets allocated for the purchase of teaching materials; systemic bribery, abuse of office, sexual misconducts fuelling examination malpractices, unmerited advantages, and poor performance; serious preference for financial rewards in admission process into education institutions, where the best but poor students are denied.

The administration's continued unwillingness to exert appropriate sanction against erring officials found wanting in cases of silent but illegitimate re-engagement of the former Chairman of the Presidential Pension Reform Task Team, Abdurashheed Maina, who was disengaged from service by the previous administration over N2.7b Pension Fraud; non-investigated N120bn security scam attributed to the serving Inspector-General of Police (IGP), Ibrahim Kpotum Idris; the hypocritically unresolved alleged breach of due process in the award of \$25 billion contract involving the Group Managing Director (GMD) of the Nigerian National Petroleum

Corporation, NNPC, Dr. Maikanti Baru; and many others, is indeed worrisome.

Likewise, the administration's emerging dwindling capability in handling high profile corruption cases, giving chances to culprits to walk freely on the street and positive signal to potential culprits to freely engage in corruption has raise concerns in the country and at international community. Indeed, some former state governors who have cases to answer have brazenly come back to political reckoning, confidently walk the streets, and are appointed to deliberate on national issues.

Prior to the launching of CPI, having observed the persistent deviation and mismatch in the administration's commitments on corruption and discrepancies in the implementation, as part of critical follow-ups, CISLAC had through various platforms—advocacy, research, capacity building and networking, demanded strict compliance and warned against the unfavourable consequence on the nation's image.

CISLAC observed with persistent warning that the manners in which systemic corrupt practices were encouraged and celebrated, especially in the public sector, if not rapidly addressed would ultimately erode citizens' trust and confidence in governance and eventually backpedal the gains and recorded progress from anti-corruption in the country.

It also found the persistently apparent disregard for relevant anti-corruption bills and the needless legislative time and resources dedicated in pushing for passage of NGO Bill by the National Assembly, as a potential setback to anti-corruption efforts and mechanisms in the country.

On transparency and accountability in regards to asset recovery, in 2016 at the Anti-corruption Summit in London, the administration committed to strengthen asset recovery legislation through the passing of the Proceeds of Crime Bill to provide for transparent management of returned assets and non-conviction based approach to asset recovery; and develop internationally endorsed guidelines for the transparent and accountable

In the health sector, continued diversion of funds reduces the level of resources and investments available for the public health system. Resources are reportedly drained from health budget through embezzlement, fraud and corruption...

management of returned stolen assets. Two years after the Summit, the administration still lags in fulfilling the commitments.

Although the Economic Financial Crime Commission (EFCC) disclosed, during the 7th Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) held in Vienna in November 2017, that 2.9 billion USD have been recovered between May 2015 and Oct. 20, 2017, but there is little information and absence of clear guidelines on how these recovered assets are utilized to maximally benefit the common citizens whose interest government had promised to protect.

With the overlapping mandates of anti-corruption agencies on asset recovery management, it is unclear, which of the many anti-corruption institutions takes a lead in the coordination of asset recovery efforts. Crucial legislature with a potential to establish an acceptable asset recovery management framework such as the Proceeds of Crime Bill, 2014 is stalled without explanation.

The suspension of Nigeria from the elite EGMONT group of financial intelligence agencies is ample evidence of chaotic institutional structure in the anti-corruption domain bedevilled by inexplicable inter-agency rivalry and lack of coordination of the anti-corruption effort.

Absence of independent, comprehensive review of how many assets that could be repatriated from all agencies with the power to seize assets, and verifiable information on the end-use and the impact of reinvested assets is a systemic challenge to successful anti-corruption fight.

Also, at a Global Forum for Asset Recovery (GFAR) held recently in Washington, USA, in December 2017, Executive Director of CISLAC made some disclosures on Nigeria's progress in Beneficial Ownership transparency.

The Executive Director, who was also a Nigerian delegate at the Forum, bemoaned absence of legal requirement for Nigerian companies to maintain a register of Beneficial Ownership.

He said: "In Nigeria, beneficial owners can hide behind legal person members of a company without being identified. No legal requirements for Nigerian companies to maintain a register of Beneficial Ownership.

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Absence of independent, comprehensive review of how many assets that could be repatriated from all agencies with the power to seize assets, and verifiable information on the end-use and the impact of reinvested assets is a systemic challenge to successful anticorruption fight.
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"We don't have established Central Register of Beneficial Ownership information and no clear rules on access for all law enforcement and tax agencies to Beneficiary Ownership information are available. We don't have legal framework for prosecution of non-disclosure of beneficial owner is available."

Citing the Nigeria's oil and gas sector as a case, the CISLAC's boss explained that Nigeria as the world's fifth largest producer of oil lost an estimated 9 billion USD since 2013 through shady practices in the oil and gas industry.

"Many of the names contained in the register of companies operating in Nigeria's oil and gas industry are not the real owners. Although it is a legal requirement to submit the names and details of directors/ shareholders of a company before it can be registered, this is regarded as a mere formality;

"Lack of transparency allows influential officials to use their positions to extract maximum rent from a country's mineral resources with minimum or no benefit to the citizens. A case in point is OPL 245 and Malabu Oil," he added.

Rafsanjani berated the continued loss of the nation's revenue to malicious tax incentives offered by the government to multinational corporations, giving chances to illicit financial flows.

"Nigeria may have lost as much as around 50 billion USD annually to illicit financial flows through money laundering, tax evasion and corruption. Oil and gas, and others companies with unclear owners enjoy tax holidays, credits and tax breaks on the expense of potential state revenues," he added.

While it is commendable that anti-corruption agencies have accelerated

the rate of convictions on anti-corruption charges with EFCC in 2016/17 brought 286 cases to conviction, however, the majority are rather insufficient cases with little impact of returned assets into the state budget and no effect on unfavorable public opinion. This exposes judicial incapacity or reluctance in prosecuting high profile cases involving senior public servants and elected politicians who have plundered lucrative Nigerian state resources or responsible for the catastrophic lack of oversight on public funds as mandated by the Constitution.

Corruption is not far-fetched in Nigeria's Defence sector. A report titled "Weaponising Transparency: Defence Procurement Reform as a Counterterrorism Strategy in Nigeria" published by Transparency International Defence and Security Programme in collaboration with CISLAC reveals how violence extremism thrives in Nigeria as a result exploitative governing structures, unhealthy political struggles, states predation, and systemic corruption.

Similarly, a number of scandals have been recorded around the so-called 'security votes', which allow politicians to appropriate millions of dollars behind closed doors simply by evoking 'national security'. As a result, funds that are meant to buy equipment and even pay salaries go missing, leaving the military badly equipped, demoralized and incapacitated.

The Ministry of Defence's refusal to make its spending public has further made difficult to track the nation's investment on the military and allied agencies. Excessive secrecy and needless confidentiality are typically

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From left: Chioma Kanu, Program Manager (Human development, Health & Social Inclusion), CISLAC; Speaker, Katsina State House of Assembly, Rt. Hon. Abubakar Yahaya Kusada; and Abubakar Jimoh, Head of Communications, CISLAC during a courtesy visit to the Speaker at the State House of Assembly in Katsina state.

From left: Vaclav Prusa, Program Manager (Anti-corruption), CISLAC; Bathsheba Tagwai, Legal Officer, CISLAC; Okeke Anya, Program Manager (Democratic Governance), CISLAC; Austin Erameh, Program Officer (Democratic Governance), CISLAC during a Press Conference organised by CISLAC also National Contact of Transparency International (TI) in Nigeria, to officially unveil "2017 Corruption Perceptions Index" in Abuja.



From right: Dr. Chukwuka Onyekwena, Executive Director of the Centre for the Study of Economies of Africa (CSEA); Austin Erameh, Program Officer (Democratic Governance), CISLAC; Mrs. Hilda Ochefu, Sub-Regional Coordinator for West Africa of Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids (CTFK); Stephen Medaiyedu, Deputy Director Tax Policy, Federal Ministry of Finance; and Okeke Anya, Program Manager (Democratic Governance), CISLAC at recently concluded 17th World Conference on Tobacco or Health held in Cape Town, South Africa.

Continued from page 11

employed to halt the disclosure of Defence budget and procurement process, including the weak and exceptional legislative oversight activities associating with the Defence financial system.

The direct costs of Defence procurement corruption include loss of public funds through misallocations or higher expenses and lower quality of goods, services and works. Those paying the bribes seek to recover their money by inflating prices, billing for work not performed, failing to meet contract standards, reducing quality of work or using inferior materials, in case of public procurement of works. This results in exaggerated costs and a decrease in quality.

Also, corruption in security sector symbolizes institutionalised human rights abuses and systemic bribery; commercialised extortion of the already impoverished citizens at check points; denial of bails at the instance of no monetary return despite legal provisions against such; sexual assault and shooting of citizens for refusing to bribe; high-level embezzlement and diversion of security personnel entitlements into private pockets; porous nation's borders, which paves ways for influx illegal immigrants, illegal importation of weapons of various kinds that further endanger lives of the citizens.

The extent of judges frustrating justice for compensations or enticement of various kinds has been reported. Endemic corruption in judicial system has resulted in loss of public confidence and hopelessness in the system.

The judiciary has a great role to play in the efforts to save the nation from imminent collapse under the weight of unbridled corruption. Without doubt, judges symbolize the judicial powers of the state; they stand out as the central figures in the judicial system and the administration of justice. Politicians are abusing offices and distorting judicial processes. Some registrars of lower courts build houses for judges in the Supreme Court, as gratification. Nigerian politicians alleged put judges on pay roll, even when such is against judicial code of ethics. High-ranking judicial officers acting as couriers of bribe;

Consequently, corruption cripples

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The direct costs of Defence procurement corruption include loss of public funds through misallocations or higher expenses and lower quality of goods, services and works.
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Nigeria socio-economic development including the fast-falling educational standard, dilapidating healthcare, bad roads, rising unemployment – breeding crimes and vandalism such as armed robbery, kidnapping, and youth agitation, poorly motivated security personnel, youth under-development, degraded national image, bad governance, eroded erodes standards, poor public services, infrastructural decay, massive brain drain.

It is worthy of a note that on the African continent, Nigeria ranks 32nd in Africa out of 52 assessed countries in 2017. While Botswana leads the continent with the record of competent and largely corruption-free public administration, Nigeria falls with 27 points hopelessly behind. In West Africa, Nigeria ranks out of 17 countries second worst leaving only Guinea Bissau behind.

In order to revert the unfavourable trend, clear guidelines must be established on the use of recovered assets with priority given to the health and education sector. It is important to have in place, a policy framework to set up integrity trust fund to manage asset recovery proceeds with involvement of credible CSOs and honest Nigerians.

International jurisdictions which harbour estimated \$5 billion of Nigerian stolen assets must engage the Nigerian government without delay and in a transparent manner so that proceeds of corruption can benefit, especially the 61% of Nigerian living in abject poverty.

Publishing a breakdown of confiscated assets by all mandated agencies without delay will disperse the public suspicion of re-looting of looted assets. A comprehensive asset recovery policy must stipulate the handling of various types of assets

including perishable assets.

The judiciary must put a preference to civil proceedings, especially non-conviction based confiscation in absence of accused in the context of the inability to prosecute corrupt politically exposed persons and others in criminal court trials.

Developing clear policy actions on asset recovery as recommended by Global Forum for Asset Recovery in 2017 is paramount to revert current trend and successfully combat corruption in Nigeria. The inclusion of CSOs in the nation-wide discussion on the management and the end-use of recovered assets is imperative.

Government must make the 2017 Anti-corruption strategy public, assign responsibilities for its implementation with a detailed and costed action plan monitored by civil society organizations; prioritize anti-corruption courts and nominate judges with proven record of high integrity and no controversies; prioritize international cooperation and usage of international agreements to repatriate Nigerian assets abroad and use foreign jurisdictions' legal instruments such as recently passed Unexplained Wealth Order in UK to expose Nigerian illicit financial flows.

The administration must get rid of absurd privileges for elected public officials and senior civil servants including insisting on the public submission of asset declarations of the executive, legislative and judiciary officials. Government must strengthen anti-corruption institutions, ensure adequate protection and encouragement for whistle-blowers, and intensify media and public consciousness in demanding transparency and accountability in governance.

'We Don't Implement Constituency Project'

– Rt. Hon. Kusada

Rt. Hon. Yahaya Abubakar Kusada is the Speaker of Katsina State House of Assembly. In this interview with ABUBAKAR JIMOH and CHIOMA KANU of Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC), he discusses extensively on significant development legislative activities have enjoyed in the Assembly under his leadership, while clarifying doubt and addressing disparity between the core legislative mandates and constituency project. He also speaks on the importance of constituency outreach to legislative process. Excerpts:



We would like to first of all congratulate you on your turbaning as Garkuwan Katsina, congratulations Honourable Speaker.

Thank you very much.

What significant contributions have you made to legislative process as Speaker of the House?

Honestly speaking, from February 15th 2017 when I resumed as Speaker of the House, I have been able to facilitate many activities that pave way for effective legislature activities in the House. By so doing, I am proud to say we have achieve a lot, especially in the passage of Bills that have directly affected constituents' interests. These cut across social sector and other spheres of life. If you can see from my table, I have a letter from an organisation working on health stating that Katsina State House of Assembly is one of the Houses of Assembly from Northwest which pass Bills on health related issues. You can see how far we have gone in contributing significantly to legislative process. We have so many motions from Members of the House to address constituents' complaints and interests.

We were also able to sanitise the system in such a way that we put things in order. We address the complaints of the people as part of our mandates. We are doing all we can

within the mandates to safeguard the interest of the people of Katsina State and to compliment on the other hand, the effort of the government in doing what it can to give the people what they need.

We constantly engage the executive arm by guiding it on what to do in improving policy environment in fulfilment of people's expectations.

How do you ensure compliance in implementation of the laws passed by the House, especially the Appropriation Bill?

The issue of Budget is an important aspect and is one primary duties of legislator to ensure effective implementation of the budget. Whenever the budget is presented before the honourable House, we make sure that the Appropriation Committee take charge of the budget and engage the ministries, department and agencies. We interact with them. I even sat with them for a week to compile the budget after which we presented it before the House for deliberation. We sent it to executive arm after passage and the Governor assented to it.

I am proud to say that we passed a budget that could be implemented on 1st of January 2018. This has never happened in the House. We coordinated our activities very well that we have a timeframe. We have scheduled

particular days for bilateral meetings with the ministries and compile the budget. We make all the necessary amendments. We also engage the Budget Department in the state, so that we will operate on the same page. Through this process, whenever we finally arrived at a figure, the State Government would appreciate that we have done our job. That is why there was a slight amendment from what the executive presented to the House and what it received.

In fact, the honourable House this year did what other states have not done, because I know of some Houses that have not finished with their budgetary process. So, we have done our best and I am proud that our effort has provided the executive with ample time for implementation. We now set the record very straight that from January to December this is the financial year, so we have to do what we can within this particular period.

How do you relate with your constituency?

Well, constituent relation is another primary assignment of a legislator. So you see constituent relation is not something a legislator can run away from. He or she must go back to the constituents, engage them, talk to them, listen to them to understand what they want and what they are up to. By Monday you will start seeing Members coming back from their respective constituencies, expressing motion on the floor of the House on feedback from constituents. They will present before the House what they have discussed with their people, and the intervention they expect from the government. I can assure you that Members are very much in contact with their constituencies. Some even leave within their constituencies. They only come to the Assembly for legislative activities. So, you see there is a robust legislative-constituent relation.

Could you discuss some of the projects you have implemented in your constituency?

You see, each time I'm asked about constituency project, I can't just help myself in answering the question. I don't have money to implement constituency project. What we do is influencing the project to our constituencies. We don't have any right to implement project. Whatever we do is just influencing project to the constituencies. Although we have constituency project in our budget, but we only give allocation to concern ministry to take up the implementation. We even put it in the budget and provide the concern ministry with allocation to execute the project.

So, how do you explain this to the constituents who have much of such expectation?

We are trying hard. It is honestly hard but we are trying to make them understand that a legislator at whatever category don't execute project. We don't have the money to execute project. The change we voted is about doing things as they should be done. When I went on radio and

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...constituent relation is
not something a legislator
can run away from.
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television to engage all Katsina people, through a live programme most people called to ask similar question and I responded. But to me it is time to tell ourselves the bitter truth that when you vote anybody as a lawmaker, you have done so to allow him to oversee activities of the government and engage the constituency. You should not expect a lawmaker to go and execute constituency project. We are not in that era and we are not going to that.

As a youth leader, what advise do you have for Nigerian youth?

I would like to advise the youth to be proactive. They should engage themselves in action projects, as such pay. I am not saying they pay not because they will get money or build mansion or whatever but they will live a fulfilled life having contributed positively to their society.

When we were small children, we constantly heard from our parents in our native language that “Yara Manyan Gobe” meaning “children are the leaders of tomorrow”. You see, when we refuse or shy away from taking part in partisan politics, we are ignorantly ignoring that privilege or mandate to serve the people. Whenever I have the avenue to talk to the youth, I advise them to be proactive, especially in taking part in partisan politics. It is the only available channel to take part in leadership of the country.

So, if we shy away from it, we give old people the chance to constantly be in power and we can't fight them because it is a process and you refuse to partake in the process, then you allow somebody to partake and he will just continue to rule you whether you like it or not.

This is a wakeup call, we should all be ready to partake in the active partisan politics and seek for leadership. That is why when “Not too young to run” was presented to the House, I didn't hesitate, I didn't even consult because we just have to pass it into law. We are hoping that somewhere in the nearest future to see youth in the Senate.

We believe when it comes to politicking, the youth have a vital role to play. So why can't they aspire for the electoral position? Why can't they be the leaders themselves? Whenever a youth is contesting for a position, let other youth give him or her maximum support.

'Parents Should Cooperate With Govt To Tackle Early Marriage' – Rafsanjani

Auwal Musa (Rafsanjani) is the Acting Secretary General of the West African Civil Society Forum (WACSOF) and also Executive Director of Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC). He has many years experience working in the areas of gender, human rights, anti-corruption, legislative advocacy, environment and budget activism. In this interview, Musa who recently led a delegation to the ECOWAS parliament to advocate for a minimum marriage age, speaks on tackling early marriage and implementing legislations.



You recently stated at an event that early marriage is increasing in the north?

Yes, it is increasing in northern Nigeria and we have also noticed it increasing in many parts of West African countries. This because of the declining educational opportunities for young girls, and the deepening poverty that is making some people have an excuse to discharge their female children for marriage. With the view of getting some small 'change' with which they can get a relief but if you look at it, it is not really a relief.

You are actually mortgaging the future, health and life of that child. Because we have seen many of these children given out for marriage at a tender age, especially when they are not able to decide whether they like the man or not, ending up having problems. Because their body is not yet mature to go through pregnancy.

In most cases they end up having Vesico Vaginal Fistula (VVF) and the men usually run away. We have been to hospitals and seen these young girls whose husbands abandoned them, and in some cases they out rightly divorce them. Therefore we think it is not fair, it is inhuman, and cheating.

That is why we are advocating for a minimum age that will be applicable to every child. By then the child would have gone to primary school and possibly even secondary school before you her out for marriage.

For example under Islam, marriage happens only when there is consent of the parties. We noticed in many cases where these small children are given out at the age of 12 or 13 years that they cannot think and reflect on what is good for them or not. We think that has violated the principle of Islamic marriage.

Of course the other principle of the marriage has to do with the witness and paying dowry. But one of the most important principles of marriage in Islam is the consent of the person. You cannot say that a child has capacity to decide on what she or he should have. Also most importantly given the fact that there is serious deficit health financing in Nigeria, government is not able to meet the medical bills of many of these young girls that have been victim of VVF and other related problems.

We think that it is important for parents to cooperate with the government to allow their children have a future. Because if a child is not educated, definitely that

child becomes a liability. And if the child is educated tomorrow that child can even help the parents. So instead of throwing your child in the hands of a wicked person who will destroy her future, it is important that parents protect their children and also help them grow to decide what is good for them.

We also noticed that after this marriage even where there are health problems, some of these irresponsible men just divorce the girls within six months to one year without taking them into consideration.

That is why you see many of them now roaming the streets either begging or men taking advantage of their financial difficulty to use them for sex slavery. It is really inhuman, totally un-Islamic, and totally anti-human right to continue with this kind of wicked practice. That is why we are calling on parents and government and all stakeholders to please make sure their children are properly educated at least up to secondary school level before they give them out for marriage.

Do you have statistics of this increasing number in the north?

Actually it is on-going. There are many researches going on but I know that it is very predominant in northern Nigeria. While it is early marriage in the north, in the south you have teenage pregnancy. Young girls are being impregnated just for commercial purposes or for just sexual pleasure there. There are baby factories in some places in the south where wicked men impregnate young girls and give them a token. At the end of the day they may not even survive. The practice is totally unacceptable for any decent society.

In some of the countries you are advocating for pegging minimum marriage age are people who because of their religious and cultural beliefs do not agree to a stipulated marriage age. For them a child can be married off when she reaches puberty, how do you intend to convince them?

It is very simple. They need to go to the hospitals to see for themselves how these girls are dying and nobody is helping them. So if you want to throw away your daughter and put her through that kind of calamity, it means you don't really love your daughter. I don't see any responsible person who will see untimely death for his daughter and allow her to go in especially with this kind of enlightenment that is going on.

Responsible parents seeing this kind of repercussion will refrain from the hasty decision of giving out their children for marriage without even seeking their consent.

Do you think the international conventions that Nigeria is signatory to are being implemented in the country especially the ones on gender and women rights?

If they are being implemented we wouldn't be talking

about these issues now. Many African countries are signatories to these conventions but never domesticate or implement them. It is of great concern for us that is why we are calling on Nigerian government to implement the laws and show commitment so that we can look respectable in the eyes of the world.

In the sub region, what other issue gives you concern?

Insecurity in the region arising from political violence is of serious concern to us. You saw what happened in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Niger and what nearly happened in Nigeria. The tension is growing because of the selfish interest of leaders who tried to change the laws of their country to favour them.

That is why we are supporting ECOWAS on the issue of tenure limit so that the leaders can do what is right, and not plunge their country in crises.

What is your advice for the new administration of General Muhammadu Buhari?

The administration has opportunity to address so many of these wrong doings especially corruption and insecurity. We are hoping he will sanitize the system giving his past records, so that he will be able to bring back the discipline that we need in this country. A lot of things are not working well, we hope the new administration will create job opportunities for millions of our youth that are just idle.

Most importantly, to also block corruption and all leakages, so that we can have enough resources to develop this country.

The National Assembly should know that they are being expected to make laws that will ensure good governance and accountability, and also cooperate with the federal government to do the right thing. If the national assembly does not carry out its responsibilities as a law making body, we wouldn't be able to have the change we have been desiring for.

I wish to call on government to be more proactive in responding to the yearnings and aspirations of Nigerians. Nigerians are expecting a lot from this government so this government should give them hope and confidence that they are there to bring the necessary sanity for them to have a sense of belonging, and contribute to the development of this country.

Chibok girls?

It is painful that the girls are yet to be rescued till now. It is unfortunate that it happened, and the previous administration almost made it a none issue possibly because the children are not children of big men. I hope that the government of Buhari is committed to the issue of security and will rescue the girls and reunite them with their parents.

COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A ONE-DAY EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE, CSOs AND MEDIA DIALOGUE ON MATERNAL HEALTH ACCOUNTABILITY ORGANIZED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, HELD AT ROYAL HOTEL, DUTSE JIGAWA STATE ON 22ND FEBRUARY, 2018.

PREAMBLE:

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a One-day Executive, Legislative, CSOs and Media Dialogue on Maternal Health Accountability. The Dialogue aims at bringing Jigawa State's executive, legislators, CSOs and media under one roof to brainstorm on current trend, progress, opportunities and challenges on maternal healthcare service provision and delivery in the state. The meeting drew about 20 participants representing Jigawa State House of Assembly, State Primary Health Care Development Agency, Budget and Economic Planning Directorate, Ministries of Health, Education and Women Affairs, Civil Society Organizations, and the Media. After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following progress, challenges and opportunities were recorded:

Progress:

1. The state has recorded reduction in child deaths with 163/1000LB of under-5 as against 275/1000 previously recorded.
2. Increased individual and community awareness on reporting of maternal deaths to inform appropriate qualitative and quantitative data for policy and legislative decisions and interventions.
3. In 2018 Appropriation, the state has allocated N6.702billion to the health sector, as against N5.3billion in 2017 (an increment of 21%).
4. A Bill to legalize Foundation Year Programme, a scheme proposes to encourage community girls enrolment into health institutions and community participation in maternal health services, is presently receiving legislative attention in the State House of Assembly.
5. With N75million monthly allocation to maternal health services in 2018, the service is presently accessible in 166 out of 686 Health facilities in the state.
6. Apart from enhanced sensitization on the effects of diversion of drugs, the state presently enjoys collaboration among Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Civil Society groups on monthly monitoring visit to health facilities to ensure judicious utilisation of funds for maternal and child health services.
7. The State has recruited over 500 Primary Health workers posted across the grassroots to improve access to healthcare services.

8. Presently 100 (from 42) ward level facilities are providing 24 hours services and about 500 are providing ante-natal services.
9. The State is currently utilizing the \$1.5million provided by the World Bank for Save One Million Lives Program in improving six different health indicators including maternal health as key priority.
10. The state has recorded track-able increase in civil society advocacy for the effective and efficient delivery of F-MNCH services; and public sensitization on the services.
11. Public and private media have instituted a regular health programmes with mainstreamed agenda setting and investigative journalism to raise public and policy consciousness on maternal health in the state.

Challenges:

1. Delay in the implementation of National Health Act, 2014 at national level constitutes a serious setback to accessibility by the State Primary Health Care Development Agency to 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 Act.
2. Persistent commercialization value attached to programmes, inadequate support and innovation by some media outfits in promoting public and policy awareness on maternal health.
3. Delay in full implementation of the international commitment on allocation to the health sector remains a major impediment to the provision of adequate and accessible healthcare.
4. Over-reliance on donors' support dwindles effort at harnessing local resource mobilization and allocation to finance health.
5. Change in political environment may pose a setback to existing progress and success.
6. Drastic shift in donors' interest, policy or focus on programmes and activities hampers sustainability.
7. Paucity of funds and inadequate human resources for health.

Opportunities:

1. Existing political-will and committed policy responsiveness to maternal health issues.
2. Rising individual and community consciousness on maternal health related issues

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COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A ONE-DAY EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE, CSOs AND MEDIA DIALOGUE ON MATERNAL HEALTH ORGANIZED BY CIVIL SOCIETY LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY CENTRE (CISLAC) WITH SUPPORT FROM THE MACARTHUR FOUNDATION, HELD AT MAKERA HOTEL, KATSINA STATE ON 1ST MARCH, 2018.

PREAMBLE:

Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) organized a One-day Executive, Legislative, CSOs and Media Dialogue on Maternal Health. The Dialogue aims at bringing Katsina state's executive, legislators, CSOs and media under one roof to brainstorm on current trend, progress, opportunities and challenges on maternal healthcare service provision and delivery in the state. The meeting drew participants representing State House of Assembly, Ministries of Health, Education and the Media. After exhaustive deliberations on various thematic issues, the following trend, progress, opportunities, challenges and recommendations were recorded:

Progress:

1. In 2018 Appropriation, the state has allocated 11.8% of its total budget to the health sector.
2. The State House of Assembly has sustained and intensified its existing open door policy with the civil society group to present issues and recommendations on improving maternal health services.
3. The state has proposed recruitment of additional 450 health personnel in the 2018 Appropriation to bridge existing gaps in healthcare service delivery.
4. The state government has mainstreamed two candidates each across 34 local governments in the state into state's School of Nursing and Midwifery to fill human resources challenge bedeviling accessibility to maternal health services, especially in the grassroots.
5. Maternal Death Review is presently conducted and reported to provide quantitative and qualitative data to inform appropriate policy and legislative decision and intervention on maternal health in the state.
6. Katsina State Accountability Mechanism – comprising State Assembly, Executives, CSOs and Media, presently scrutinizes maternal health issues and regularly advocates to the State Ministry of Health.
7. The state Government through SOML programme has re-employed qualified nurses and midwives into the health service primarily to fill existing human resources gaps in the health sector.
8. Media holds constructive criticisms and accountability on government policy and programmes on maternal health.
9. The state government responded to issues of nutrition by employing nutritionists to promote accessible to maternal and child nutrition services in the state.
10. The State Government has graduated over 100 female

students from School of Nursing and Midwifery mainstreamed and trained under Foundation Year Programme.

Opportunities:

1. Proposed CSOs-Executive meeting in the state will help to ascertain Maternal Health allocation for 2018.
2. About \$6million was given as a bonus for effective performance—zonal champion, to the state by the World Bank in addition to its existing \$1million under the Save 1million lives initiative.
3. The State House of Assembly is currently deliberating on amendment to the College of Nursing and Midwifery and College of Health Science and Technology laws to sustain Foundation Year Programme.
4. Accountability Mechanism group leverages on existing radio programmes and legislative engagements to articulate trend, development, progress and challenges on maternal health.
5. Civil society presently advocates for international training and experience sharing programme to enhance media capacity and reportage on maternal health related issues.
6. The institutionalized Primary Health Care under one roof will ensure coordination and improve healthcare service delivery.
7. Existing appreciable level of political will and interest in maternal health service provision and delivery.
8. Open door policy to committed Health Committee demanding accountability on maternal health related issues.
9. The existing collaboration among Ministries of Women Affairs, Education and Health in awareness creation and women mobilization for health attendance.
10. Existing School Feeding Programme remains an enabling platform to promote maternal and childhood nutrition services in the state.
11. Existing Health Reporters Forum leveraging the social media in advocating maternal health related issues.

Challenges:

1. Lack of synergy and direct budget line item by the underlining ministries on maternal health.
2. Under-reported related progress and development in the health sector in the media
3. Existing human resources gaps in the health sector

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Why The Fight Against Corruption Is Our Fight

By Glorial Chinyere Okwu

One major encumbrance in the anti-corruption war is our inability to relate it to ourselves. Individual's mind-set towards our leaders' political actions and inactions directly and indirectly impacts on the society.

We have constantly failed to bridge these widen gaps, therefore believing the fight is for some group, where we ought to be fully involved.

While these leaders are not only products of our society, they are as well brought into power by the electorate who dodge the responsibility to checkmate their excesses through legitimate and constitutional means, especially in cases of corruption.

Meanwhile, the looted resources are public treasury, tax payers' money and collective national wealth which should be used for the common good and not diverted to private pockets or satisfy personal greed.

Thirdly, every diverted resource

is a blow to our collective interest manifesting poor infrastructure, crippled health system, decayed educational system and most of all, a disgruntled, confrontational populace maligned with misguided hate and feelings of apparent injustice.

The devastating effects of corruption on individuals' psyche and attitude towards one another cannot be quantified. It is downright harrowing and a national embarrassment. Fourthly, Public Office is a trust and when a leader breaks the collective trust bestowed on him/her, it behooves on us to make them take responsibility.

In order to bring this message home to the people who are at the receiving end of corruption, the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre in partnership with Transparency International Berlin and Global Canada, through the Advocacy and Legal Advice Centre (ALAC) project has been engaging sensitisation programmes for communities and

women group on their rights and responsibilities in the fight against corruption.

The timely project aims at addressing corruption at the grassroots, bringing people to terms with the ignored but direct link corruption has with them. With a recently launched online platform to report cases of corruption for maximum and timely follow-up, the project supports victims and witnesses of corruption.

We must therefore, understand that every stolen resource draws us close to the brink of everything unfavourable, unacceptable and absolutely embarrassing. We must realize that we are all leaders in our own right and must look inwards every now and then. It is also vital to hold people accountable, notwithstanding their positions or nomenclatures. This patriotic stand is a core responsibility expected of every Nigerian irrespective of tribe, education, gender or religion.

Continued from page 18

3. The establishment of additional health institutions in the state to mitigate shortage in health personnel.
4. Existing Bill to legalize Foundation Year Programme.
5. Availability of indigenous health experts to be leveraged by the public and private media in galvanizing policy and public awareness on maternal health.
6. Availability of indigenous philanthropists to harness local resources for financing maternal health
7. Existing untapped agricultural facilities to address food insecurity and malnutrition.

Recommendations:

- The State House of Assembly to fast-track its oversight visit to monitor the implementation level of Free MNCH services across health facilities in the state.
- Improving CSOs and media advocacy and sensitization to community on maternal health.
- Strengthening CSOs advocacy to the policy and legislative arms for sustained support to maternal

health.

· Considering transition of the existing programmes and policies on maternal health to legislation for sustainability.

Signed:

1. Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani)
Executive Director, CISLAC
2. Hon. Lawan Garba Mohammed
Chairman, Committee on Health, Jigawa State House of Assembly
3. Dr. Shehu Sambo
Jigawa State Primary Health Care Development Agency
4. Ibrahim T.
Jigawa State Budget and Planning Directorate
5. Rabi Nasoro
Jigawa State Ministry of Women Affairs
6. Comrade Muhammad Musbahu Basirka
Jigawa State Civil Society Coalition
7. Isah Uzair
FRCN Jigawa

Tobacco Use: Stakeholders Bemoan Growing Burdens On Public Resources

By Austin Erameh

The Cross Rivers State Ministry of Environment has said the associated risks to tobacco use remained endemic increasing burdens on public resources.

This disclosure was made by Mr. Samuel Njar representing the Ministry at the recently concluded 'Expanded Workshop for Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in South-South Nigeria' organised by the Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC) under the aegis of African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) in Calabar, Cross Rivers state.

Speaking from environmental perspective at the Workshop, Mr. Njar identified tobacco as a major challenge to public resources, noting that a considerable amount of resources is currently being spent by the Ministry in addressing



environmental challenges of which tobacco is a priority.

Also, the State Ministry of Health represented Dr. Mrs Virginia O. Inah added that the health risks associated with tobacco use makes it a major concern for the Ministry and Cross Rivers State Government.

Dr. Inah acknowledged the efforts of the Civil Society

Organizations (CSOs) for continued support and awareness creation on the harmful effects of tobacco use and counselling and support.

The workshop discussed extensively on the National Tobacco Control Act of 2015 and other related initiatives at state levels primarily to introduce policy and law, where there are none and advance effective implementation, where they exist.

More importantly, a dedicated session of the Workshop introduced participants to tactics deployed by Tobacco Industries to floor tobacco control policy and law, underscoring the need for actors to be vigilant using monitoring techniques introduced to them.

Continued from page 19

delay adequate accessibility to maternal health services.

4. Under-performance by the Office of Senior Special Assistant to the Governor on Development Partners and Donor Agencies delays appropriate monitoring of donors' presence, capital receipts to avoid duplication of activities in maternal healthcare by development partners.
5. Delayed collaboration among Ministries of Women Affairs, Health, Education and Information remains a challenge in sustaining synergy in financing and activities on maternal health.
6. Inadequate nutrition-specific human resources across schools to administer and mainstream nutrition and maternal health related issues into home management teaching curriculum.

Action Points:

1. Civil Society group to facilitate the implementation of provision of the National Health Act.
2. Civil Society group to facilitate collaboration among underlining Ministries in improving synergy in activities and finance for maternal health.

3. Civil Society to continuously advocate for better partnership to facilitate adequate monitoring and speed release of funds.
4. Media to partner development partners on capacity building to enhance accurate and effective reportage on maternal health.
5. Civil society to facilitate special engagement plan between line ministries and donor agencies.
6. Executives to facilitate timely release of funds across the line ministries.

Signed:

1. Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani)
Executive Director, CISLAC
2. Abubakar Faiza
Katsina State House of Assembly
3. Hajara B. Kankara
Katsina State Ministry of Education
4. Mannir Madaha
State Ministry of Health
5. Comrade Muhammad Usman
Katsina State Civil Society Coalition
6. Buhari Ahmed Badi
Katsina State Media

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|----|----------------------|---|------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 17 | SB. 12 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the National Agricultural Land Development Authority Act N4 LFN 2004 by increasing its Membership and Functions for Strategic Operation and interest and Vest in the Authority Powers to Establish Farm Settlements across the Country for the Purpose of attaining Food Sufficiency and for other Matters connected therewith. | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Mao A. Ohuabunwa |
| 18 | SB. 496 | A Bill for an Act to Prohibit and Prevent Electricity Theft, Vandalisation of Public Power Infrastructure and Protection of Power Company Personnel and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Yahaya Abdullahi |
| 19 | SB. 589 | A Bill for an Act to Provide for the Federal Referral Hospital in the Six Geo - Political Zones of the Country and For Other Matters Connected therewith | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Adamu Aliero |
| 20 | SB. 461 | A Bill for an Act to Provide for the Integrated Corporate Data Management Commission as the body responsible for Comprehensive Collation, Harmonization of Certificates issued by Corporate Statutory bodies and other Matters Connected therewith | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Yusuf A. Yusuf |
| 21 | SB. 172 | A Bill for an Act to establish the Chartered Institute of Finance and Control in Nigeria and for other Matters Connected therewith | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. David Umaru |
| 22 | HB. 1108 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Factories Act, Cap. F1, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Review the Penalties for Offences Created under the Act and Change the Title of the Act; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Stella Ngwu |
| 23 | HB. 795 and HB. 1071 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission Act, Cap. E1, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to ensure that Forfeited Properties are returned to the Original Owners of the Proceeds of the Crimes or Original Owners of the Properties/Assets and to enable the Commission act within its Jurisdiction; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Edward Gyang Pwajok |
| 24 | HB. 1249 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Institute of Chartered Chemists of Nigeria Act, Cap. I112, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Provide for the Role of the Chemist, the Regulation of Practicing Fees by Members of the Institute; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Usman Muhammad |
| 25 | SB. 538 | A Bill for an Act to Establish the Nigerian Customs Service Pension Board to handle Pensions matters foe Personnel of the Service and for Other Connected purposes | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Ali Wakili |
| 26 | SB. 616 | A Bill for an Act to Provide for the establishment of the Federal College of Education Ila-Orangun, Osun State | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Olusola Adeyeye |
| 27 | SB. 580 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Public Complaints Commission Act CAP P37 LFN 2004 and for related matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Bala Ibn Naállah |
| 28 | SB. 447 | A Bill for an Act to establish the City University of Technology Auchi and for other connected matters therewith | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Francis Alimikhena |
| 29 | SB. 385 | A Bill for an Act to Establish the National Youth Development Commission and for other matters connected therewith | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Obinna Ogba |
| 30 | SB. 547 | A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Nigerian Press Council Act 1992 as Amended and to enact thereof the Nigerian Press Council Act 2018 and for related purposes | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Suleiman Adokwe |
| 31 | SB. 448 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) Act CAP C4 LFN 2004 and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Samuel N. Anyanwu |
| 32 | SB. 497 | A Bill for an Act to Repeal the Medical and Dental Practitioners Act 1988 and Establish the Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria for the Registration of Medical Practitioners and Dental Surgeons and to provide for a Disciplinary Tribunal for the discipline of members and Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Adamu Aliero |
| 33 | SB. 551 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the National War College Act CAP N82 LFN 2004 to provide for change of name to National Defence College and other Connected Purposes | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Hope Uzodinma |
| 34 | SB. 599 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Sheriffs and Civil Process Act CAP S56 LFN 2004 and for related matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. David Umaru |
| 35 | SB. 332 | A Bill for an Act to Translate and Expand the Educational Policy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria on access to Educational services by Institutionalizing Open Distance Learning in Collaboration with National Universities Commission and National Board for Technical Education and for related matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi |
| 36 | SB. 520 | A Bill for an Act to establish the Federal Polytechnic Item to Provide Full-Time Courses in technology, applied science management and other fields of studies and to make Provisions for the general Administration of the Polytechnic | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Mao A. ohuabunwa |
| 37 | HB. 1261 | A Bill for an Act to provide that 20% of Jobs Available in all Federal Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies and Companies be distributed among the Physically Challenged Persons in Nigeria; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Femi Gbajabiamila |

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| 38 | HB. 1259 | A Bill for an Act to Establish Federal University of Agriculture, Kabba to make Comprehensive Provisions for its due Management and Administration; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Senate Leader |
| 39 | HB. 1260 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Colleges of Education Act, Cap. F8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to align the Colleges of Education affected by Boundary Adjustments as a Result of States Creation and to Establish Federal College of Education, Malam Madori, Jigawa State to Address the Current Imbalance in the Establishment and Distribution of Federal Institutions in the State; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Senate Leader |
| 40 | HB. 1216 | A Bill for an Act to Establish Federal College of Education, Jama'Are Bauchi State to Provide Fulltime Courses, Teaching Instruction and Training in Technology, Applied Science, Arts, Social Sciences, Humanities and Management; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Isa H. Mohammed |
| 41 | HB. 1255 | A Bill for an Act to Establish the Abuja Broadcasting Corporation to Provide Independent and Impartial Broadcasting Service for General Reception through the Federal Capital Territory; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta |
| 42 | HB. 1244 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Value Added Tax Act, Cap. V1, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to ensure Harmony and Uniformity in the Exercise of Statutory Authority; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Rita Orji |
| 43 | HB. 1022 | A Bill for an Act to Provide for Establishment of the Institute of Environmental Practitioners of Nigeria; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Third Reading | Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno |
| 44 | HB 33 | A Bill for an Act to Establish National Biotechnology Development Agency; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Third Reading | Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno |
| 45 | HB. 1294 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Federal Capital Territory Act, 2017 in Order to Extend the Implementation Period of the Federal Capital Territory Appropriation Act, 2017 from Dec 31, 2017 to March 31, 2018 or until the coming Force of the 2018 Appropriation Act, whichever occurs earlier; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Third Reading | |
| 46 | HB. 477, 878 and 1053 | A Bill for an Act to Provide for the Governance and Institutional Framework for the Petroleum Industry and for Related Matters | 2018 | Third Reading | Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno |
| 47 | HB. 1271 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Nigeria Research Institutes Act, Cap. N132, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to include the Establishment of the Shea Butter Institute; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Abubakar Amuda-Kannike Garba |
| 48 | HB. 1233 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Police Act, Cap. P19, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and the Police Regulations, 1968 respectively to prevent continued infraction of Section 42 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 (as amended) by the requirement of Female Police Officers to request prior permission of their Commissioners of Police before undertaking Marriage; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Bassey Eko Ewa |
| 49 | HB . 1273 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Nigerian Children Trust Fund Act, Cap. N93, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to harmonize the Functions of the Nigerian Children Trust Fund; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Francis Charles Uduyok |
| 50 | HB. 165, 174,220,4 29,468,48 4,809 and 966 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Provisions of the Electoral Act, No. 6, 2010 and Electoral Amendment Act, 2015 to Provide a Time Line for the Submission of List of Candidates, criteria for Substitution of Candidates, Limit of Campaigns Expenses and Address the Omission of Names of Candidates or Logos of Political Parties; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Third Reading | Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno |
| 51 | HB. 72 and HB 612 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Energy Commission of Nigeria Act, Cap. E10, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Provide for the Establishment of Renewable and Alternative Energy Development and Utilization Fund, Grant Priority to the Promotion and Development of Renewable and other Alternative Energy; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Third Reading | Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno |
| 52 | HB. 983 | A Bill for an Act to Facilitate the Development of Nigeria's Capital Market by Enabling the Conversion and Re-Registration of the Nigerian Stock Exchange from a Company Limited by Guarantee to a Public Company Limited by Shares; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Third Reading | Hon. Mohammed Tahir Monguno |
| 53 | HB. 1201 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the National Automotive Council Act, Cap. N8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Introduce New Alternative Vehicular Transportation to Utilize Nigerian Gas; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Igariwey Iduma Enwo |
| 54 | HB. 1229 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the National Industrial Court Act, 2006 relating to the exercise of Original Jurisdiction in Civil Proceedings by the Court of Appeal and for such Other Terms as may be prescribed by the Court of Appeal; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Johnson Egwakhide Oghuma |

BILLS UPDATE (FEBRUARY, 2018)**Compiled by CISLAC**

| S/N | BILL NO | BILL NAME | YEAR | STAGE | SPONSOR |
|-----|-----------------------------|--|------|----------------|--|
| 1 | HB 1274 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Criminal Code Act, Cap.C38, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to criminalize any interference in the Duty and Authority of the Senator or the house of representatives; and for Related Matters. | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Ossai Nicholas Ossai |
| 2 | HBs.650, 948, 1220 and 1283 | A Bill for an Act to Amend Raw Materials Research and Development Council Act, Cap. R3, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to provide for Reduction in the Membership of the Council, to provide for the Payment of all Monies Received by the Council into the Federation Account in Accordance with Section 162 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999 and to Repeal the Raw Materials Research and Development Council Act, Cap. R3, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 and Re-enact the Raw Materials Research Development Council Bill; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Leader Hon. Jerry Alagbaoso, Hon. Gyang Istifanus Dung and Hon Uchechuku G. Nnam-Obi |
| 3 | HB 1138 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Notaries Public Act, Cap. N141, laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Orker-Jev Emmanuel Yisa |
| 4 | HB. 1280 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Personal Income Tax Act, Cap. P8, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to provide that Personal Income Tax Deduction of a worker should be Remitted to the Tax Authority of the state where he works; and for Related Matters. | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Tasir Olawale Raji |
| 5 | HB. 1189 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the National Human Rights Commission Act, Cap. N46, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria ,2004 to create a Special Department to be known as Department of Religious Freedom in the Commission which shall be saddled with the Responsibility of Receiving and Handling Complaints bothering on Violation of Freedom of Religion as Enshrined in Section 38 of the 1999 Constitution; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Pwajok Edward Gyang |
| 6 | Hb. 1054 | A Bill for an Act to Establish Federal University of Technology, Enugu and to make Comprehensive Provisions for its Due Management and Administration; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Patrick Asadu |
| 7 | HB. 1279 | A Bill for an Act to Establish FCT Directorate of Road Traffic and Motor Vehicle Administration Services (DRTMVAS) to be saddled with the Responsibility of Road Traffic Management and Motor Vehicle Administration Services within the Federal Capital Territory(FCT); and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Uzoma Nkem-Abonta |
| 8 | HB. 1277 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Allocation of Revenue (Federation Account, etc) Act, Cap. A15, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria, 2004 to Establish the Excess Revenue Fund Account; and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Hon. Lovette Ederin Idisi |
| 9 | SB. 584 | A Bill for an Act to Establish the Chartered Institute of Forensic and Investigative Auditors in Nigeria to Provide for the Registration and Regulation of Membership and for other Matters Connected therewith | 2018 | SeCOND Reading | Sen. Ahmed I. Lawan and Sen. Andy Uba |
| 10 | SB. 356 | A Bill for an Act to Provide for Residency Rights for every Citizen of Federal Republic of Nigeria who have lived or resided Consecutively and paid taxes to the relevant local Government of the area where such a person have lived or resided for a long period of not less than 5 years Consecutively and for any child of such person who is less than 18 years of age and have lived with the person for the same period of time and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Dino Melaye |
| 11 | SB. 536 | A Bill for an Act to Provide for the Establishment of the Federal University of Technology Manchok, and for Other Matters Connected therewith. | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Danjuma Laa'h |
| 12 | SB. 494 | A Bill for an Act to Establish the Federal Polytechnic Adikpo, Benue State to Provide Full-Time courses in Technology, Applied Science Management and Other Fields of Studies and to make Provisions for the general Administration of such Polytechnics | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Barnabas Gemade |
| 13 | SB. 471 | A Bill to Establish the Federal Polytechnic Kaltungo, Gombe State to Provide Full-Time Courses in Technology, Applied Science Management and Other Fields of Studies and to make Provisions for the general Administration of such Polytechnics. | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Joshua Lidani |
| 14 | SB. 605 | A Bill for an Act for the Establishment of the Federal College of Education Dass, Bauchi State and for other Related Matters connected therewith | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Ali Wakili |
| 15 | SB. 393 | A Bill for an Act to Establish the Federal University of Sports to make Comprehensive Provisions for its due Management and Administration and Other Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Obinna Ogba |
| 16 | SB. 300 | A Bill for an Act to Amend the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) Act 2011 and for Related Matters | 2018 | Second Reading | Sen. Abdullahi Adamu |

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