Communiqué issued at the end of a 3-day Media Training/Field visit at Consort Luxury Suites, Abuja from October 29th to November 1st, 2018.

**Theme:** The Journalists’ Role in Ensuring Transparency and Accountability in Allocation and Use of Health/Nutrition Funds in Nigeria.

The Civil Society Scaling up Nutrition in Nigeria (CS-SUNN) under the Partnership for Improving Nigeria Nutrition Systems (PINNS) project, organized the training to build capacity of media practitioners to develop stories and programmes focusing on transparency and accountability in allocation and use of health/nutrition funds in focal states and the country at large. The training was also organized to engender passion and commitment to reporting health and nutrition issues through site visit to Kwali Primary Health Care (PHC) Centre for firsthand experience of the challenges in the sector among other important issues.

It was observed that:

1. Malnutrition is a multi-sectorial issue of serious concern that requires a collective response.
2. Nigeria loses over 2000 children under five years of age on daily basis due to malnutrition.
3. Over 145 women of child bearing age die daily due to malnutrition.
4. The first 1000 days of life from the time of conception to a child’s second birth day is not prioritized.
5. Governments have not been making adequate budgetary allocation, approval, timely release and cash backing.
6. Where budgets are allocated and released, they focus more on the curative measures than preventive measures.
7. A malnourished child when immunized does not absorb/utilize the immunization.
8. There is low reportage of nutrition related issues in Nigeria.
9. 53% of deaths from child killer diseases is directly related to malnutrition.
10. Most mothers at the PHC are not practicing Exclusive Breast Feeding (EBF).
11. There is lack of male/husband involvement and support towards EBF.

Recommendations:
1. Participants agreed that stakeholders (Government, Media, CSOs, care givers, Donor agencies etc) need to place emphasis on preventive than curative measures.
2. Government and policy makers should be held accountable for their commitments.
3. Journalists should be consistent in their reportage on nutrition.
4. Media practitioners should hold government accountable by getting enough information aimed at addressing nutrition issues.
5. Media should put nutrition at the front burner and influence policy decisions through their reportage for improved nutrition interventions.
6. Participants should advocate for policies to mainstream nutrition into agriculture.
7. Media should sensitize women on the need to exclusively breastfeed their children in the first six (6) months of life, without addition of water.
8. Media should also sensitize women to continue to breastfeed their children for two years in addition to adequate complementary feeding.
9. Media practitioners are encouraged to explore key components of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) so as to bring to the fore requisite solutions to the plights of women, children and other vulnerable groups.
10. Government should scale up and sustain existing interventions on nutrition.
11. Media should intensify campaign towards behavioral change, especially for men to support EBF.

Signed:
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