

Three children die of diarrhea after parents fed them harmful water to get benefits

From **Njadvara Musa**, Maiduguri

THREE children have been confirmed dead at the Bulabulin Ngaranam Medical Clinic and several others hospitalized after some parents allegedly induced their children with water drawn from drainage and concoctions and they developed fever and diarrhea before they were taken to clinic for treatment and be beneficiaries of Plumy nuts and other gifts donated by UNICEF.

According to a source, "nearly all medicines may cause diarrhea. However, some of the parents resort to either drawing water from gutters, mixed it with concoctions and forcefully injected into the mouth of their children, which eventually caused the muscles of the intestines to contract, leading to severe diarrhea for the sake of receiving food items and later sell them."

As a result, the number of patients, mostly women and children, reporting to the clinic increased last week from 300 to over 700 on a daily basis.

Reacting yesterday, the Officer in Charge of Ngaranam Medical Clinic in Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC), Sister Maryam Baba Gaidam and the Village Head of the

area, Lawan Mala Modu, expressed dismay over the increasing cases of diarrhea among children in the clinic.

Both lamented the development when delegations from the National Primary HealthCare Development Agency (NPHCDA), led by Hajiya Jamila Hamanga, Borno State Primary HealthCare Development Agency officials and that of the Local Councils, including officials of the state Project Implementation Unit (PIU) visited the clinic for the ongoing assessment status and implementation of the pilot scheme of the Nigeria State Health Investment Project (NSHIP) in 37 health facilities selected in Jere and Maiduguri council areas.

"It is unfortunate that the abject poverty being experienced by some parents and caregivers caused by the insurgency have forced them to induce their children to take contaminated water that led to diarrhea and vomiting before taking them to nearby clinics for treatment.

"We got lots of report from this community, where some parents are into this habit. This is bad. We have stopped giving them such gifts, because we realized that some parents were misusing the opportunity just to get little money for other purposes best known to them," said Maryam.