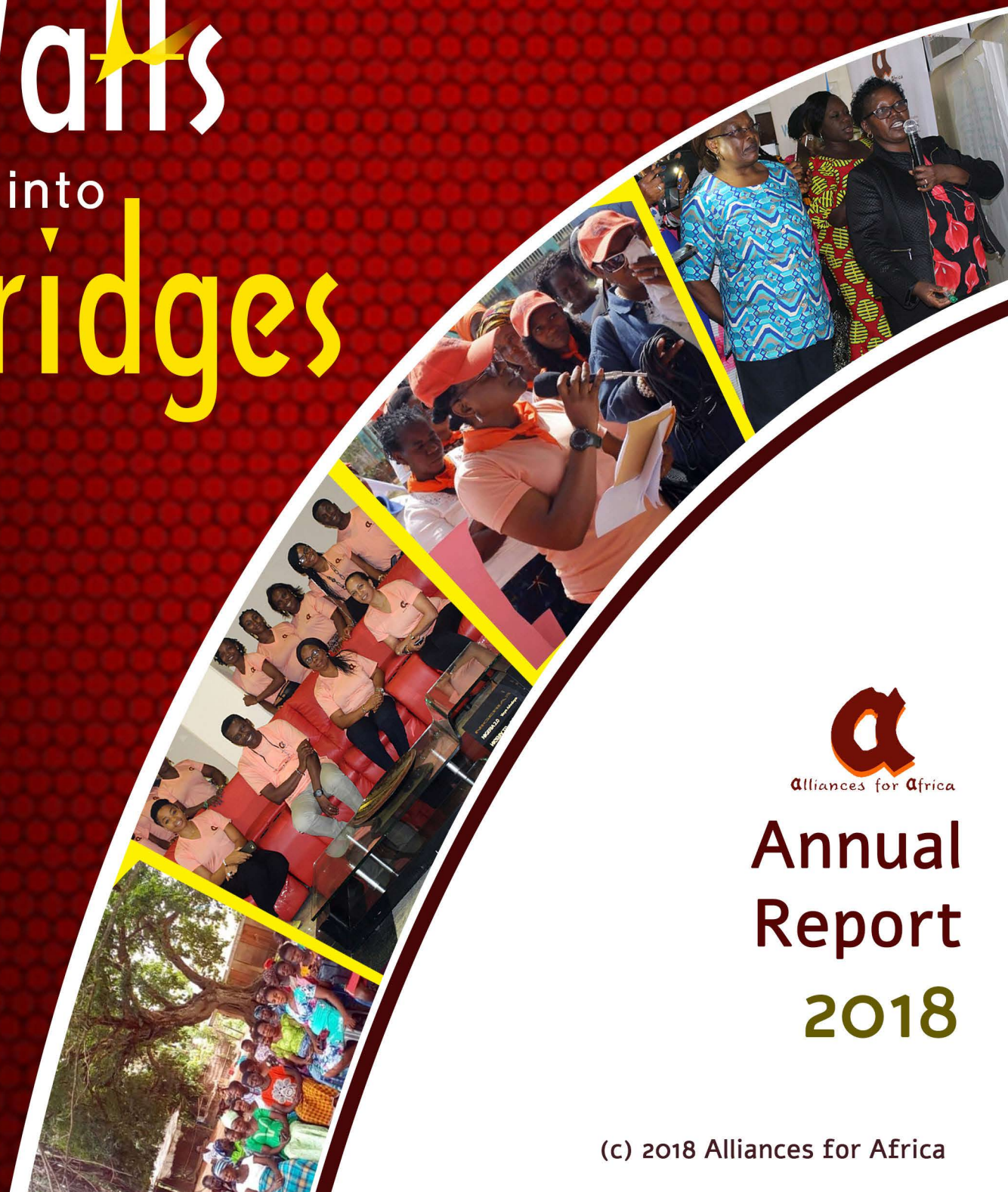


Turning Walls into Bridges

into



alliances for Africa

Annual Report 2018



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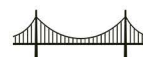
Message from our Board Chair Maureen Iheajato.

2018 was a remarkable year to increase advocacy towards the full implementation of 35% affirmative action. Thanks to the United Nations Funds for Gender Equality which supported activities advocating the full implementation of 35% affirmative action from 2016 through 2019 in South East Nigeria. Alliances for Africa team remained active in implementing the activities in view of the upcoming 2019 general elections and considering the downward representation of women in political and decision-making spaces. As at June 2018, women make 5.6% members of the House of Representatives and 6.5% members of the House of Senate. In the year 2018, Alliances for Africa diversified and intensified advocacy to get more women in leadership and decision making spaces as stated in the National Gender Policy (NGP 2006) which supports 35% representation of women in all political leadership spaces across Nigeria.

On the movement, Alliances for Africa engaged partners and allies. Media practitioners, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), community groups, political party leaders, people with disability, traditional rulers, religious leaders, Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), students from various tertiary institutions and young women joined the on-going advocacy to achieve the full implementation of 35% representation of women in leadership spaces across the South East.

From community to state and regional level, the advocacy towards increasing women's participation in politics had resulted in tremendous success. Alliances for Africa recorded 14 appointed/elected women in political leadership spaces and a total of 24 female aspirants to vie for elective positions in 2019 elections

At this crucial point of approaching 2019 elections, it is important that advocates for women inclusion in leadership shift their attention from the problem itself to taking actions that influence change through Partnership and collaboration. We get greater result when we work together to improve the lives of women and girls across Nigeria.





Strategic Objectives

- Sensitizing women and men across Nigeria on gender based violence issues and laws
- Advocate the passage and full implementation of laws on domestic violence, 35% affirmative action and other laws that supports and promotes women's right in Nigeria.
- Raising our profile and increasing member and partner engagement
- Focusing and strengthening our program direction.

AFA's **Mission** is to enhance and strengthen, on a sustainable basis, local, National, sub-regional and regional institutions in Africa, by being active in the monitoring, advancing, promoting and protecting of human rights, peace and sustainable development initiatives.

Message from our
Executive Director
Iheoma Obibi



Women participation in leadership gained attention in the year 2018. At national, state and regional level we engaged with partners, networks and coalitions who share our passion in deepening women's leadership for greater impact on the work we do.

On 2018 International Women's Day we launched a campaign to integrate young women into political leadership in Nigeria. Towards sustaining women's leadership, we trained elected female political leaders to develop and sustain their constituency projects.

We trained 25 media practitioners and 25 civil society organizations on understanding, lobbying and demanding the full implementation of 35% affirmative action. We were on the field across the south east researching the root causes of women's underrepresentation in leadership and governance. We developed strategic social innovation messages to address the challenges identified.

Approaching 2019 general elections, we continue to provide support to the women aspiring to vie for elective positions come 2019 elections.





As security walls in high places, so difficult to surmount are the factors contributing to low level of women’s participation in political sphere. Ranging from unequal status of women and men, harmful genders stereotypes, discriminatory laws and practices, unequal access to health care and education, increased poverty among women, these factors continue to be responsible for the downward representation of women in corridors of power.

Alliances for Africa with the support of UN Women had made significant strides in increasing women’s political participation in the south-east Nigeria. 2018 came with a strong need to rebuild the high walls against women participation in political leadership into bridges and create opportunities for more women to be in leadership spaces. As we prepare to achieve greater results for women in 2019 general elections,

we diversified our strategies. We trained women politicians, female candidates and elected officials. With support from the United Nations Funds For Gender Equality (FGE), women politicians were trained on leadership and fundraising skills, female aspirants got trainings on campaign strategies while elected women in political decision making were trained to take on mentorship for young women in politics.





Advocating ending Violence against Women and Girls

Violence against women and girls had taken a new trend in monetary transactions of babies, known as baby factories. Baby factory operation is tantamount to human trafficking and a serious abuse against young women. The southeast is known for an increase in the operation of baby factories. Imo state where we work is found to have a good number of baby factories operating under the guise of motherless babies homes. In 2018, Alliances for Africa started the advocacy to pass the baby factory bill into law in Imo state. The baby factory bill is a bill to prohibit the monetary transaction of babies. We had engaged in strategic advocacy to the existing institutions that work around ending violence against women to get them to buy-in and support the passage of this bill into law in Imo state to protect women and girls from violence. Such institutions as the ministry of women affairs, Imo state, National Orientation Agency, and NAPTIP. This is to announce that the baby factory will be open for public hearing in Imo state after the 2019 general elections. We hope for public support from citizens in Imo state and beyond to get the bill working, as a legal document protecting women and girls from violence in Imo state Nigeria. We will deploy the traditional and non-traditional media in 2019, to create massive

awareness on the baby factory bill and the issues it addresses. To get update on the state of the baby factory bill and activities to pass it into law in Imo state, follow us on @AfAfrica on twitter, and Facebook: Alliances for Africa and our website: www.alliancesforafrica.org

A LOOK AT THE 2018 POLITICAL PARTY PRIMARIES AND OUR WOMEN CANDIDATES

Several days, political parties' primaries election in Nigeria with special reference to the South-Eastern Nigeria. Citizens especially women have raised concerns querying the fairness of the primaries.

Nigeria is on the verge of embracing another democratic governance that proposes free, fair and credible election and inclusive governance. Political Party' primaries were concluded on October 7, 2018 in line with INEC's schedule for the General elections in 2019. Looking back at 1999, a journey of democracy and assured restiveness from military rule and dictatorship, this singular act should have reflected our dividends of democracy, most importantly a sign that political parties in Nigeria are complying with the National Gender Policy (NGP) of 35% affirmative action on women's inclusion in politics.





Figure 1 Capacity training for female politicians

We realized that on the road to conquering stereotypes and discriminatory laws and practices, women aspiring to take on the mantle of leadership will engage with traditional and non-traditional actors such as traditional community leaders, political party leaders, community leaders and religious leaders. We took strategic advocacy to every point where these stakeholders can be found to talk about women inclusion and the full implementation of 35% affirmative action.



Figure 2 Advocacy to a traditional ruler in Enugu state on women inclusion

The choice of the electorate to choose a leader be it male or female is greatly influenced by the way the said leader is perceived by the people. With the support from the UNWomen FGE, we were able to change the people's perception of female candidate. This meant that we engaged in focused group discussions across the five southeast states, we engaged with citizens to understand the root causes of women underrepresentation in decision making positions and developed social innovative messages to address these challenges. We went innovative with the

women underrepresentation in decision making positions and developed social innovative messages to address these challenges. We went innovative with the media, we deployed the social media, electronic and print media, radio programs online campaigns, special blogs and articles to raise voices about negative perception of female candidates as one root cause of women's low representation in decision-making positions. Our gender sensitivity training brought media practitioners from across the southeast together, to mainstream gender in media reporting and portrayal of female candidates and increase reporting to demand the full implementation of 35% affirmative action. Without doubt we build bridges in 2018, we are grateful for the support of partners and stakeholders who walked with us through paving the way for more women in decision making positions and the full implementation of 35% affirmative action in the southeast Nigeria. The election primaries graced our efforts with a total of twenty-two (22) successful female candidates.





Realistically, the primaries signified that election violence has become part and parcel of democratic transmission that does not favor women in the country. The primaries, were marked by violence, thugry, cheating, death threats, intimidation and with the loss of lives recorded in Ebonyi State. These vices are rooted from the patriarchal orientation of silencing women who dare to occupy decision making positions even where it affects them negatively. The five south-eastern states, Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo states respectively had their own peculiar political intrigues. Women who were screened, nominated and obtained costly nomination forms to vie for different elective leadership positions were coerced to step down for their male counterparts and asked to direct their supporters to same. Some political party members at the election field backlashed the female aspirants, disbursing cash at will to divert votes wrongly, whilst rescheduling their set dates repeatedly to buy time for atrocities.

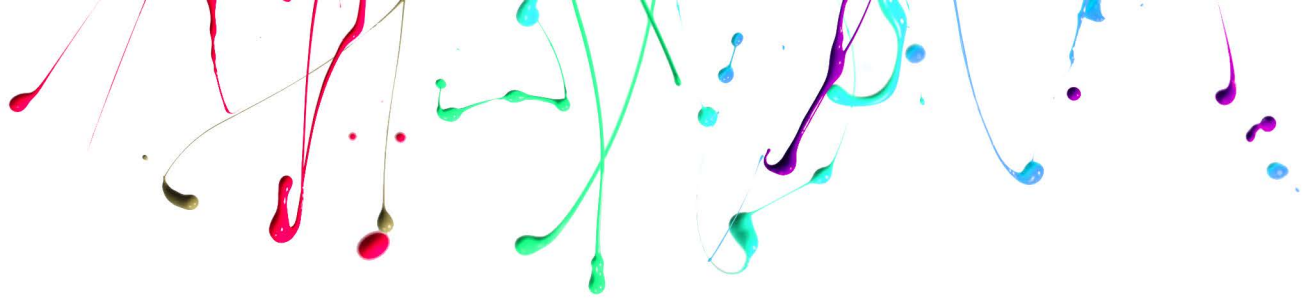
This indeed, is a tale of a collapsed system with dysfunctional rule of law, high disregard of international treaties and instruments as a member state; and a lack of clear understanding of what truly is an inclusive democracy. It further shows that the leadership of almost all the political parties in Nigeria lack the understanding and importance of building a sustainable democracy that addresses the concerns and needs of its citizens especially that of women.

The development of any country in all its ramification depends largely on her ability to produce balanced leadership of equal gender representatives able to address, redress and put resources, both natural/human and material resources together in decisions that affect interest groups at large for a better societal change unto growth and development. Democratic process in Nigeria dwindles every 4 years start leaving women psychologically, financially and socially disfigured. But the Watchdogs' will not relent in fighting this course to correct the anomaly for the sake of the younger and unborn generations.

By this, Alliances for Africa (AfA) calls on INEC, electoral bodies, political parties and security agents and various other to:

1. A review of the electoral policies with regards to due process in electioneering in Nigeria.
2. Ensure that proper sanctions are enshrined in INEC's electoral law and punitive measures taken for non-compliance from any political party.
3. Political Parties should copy from member states e.g. Kenya on Political Party Acts that govern the activities of political parties to ensure adequate representatives of all persons in political leadership especially interest groups such as women, people with disabilities, youth and other vulnerable groups to exhibit democracy even in pursuit of power and positions.





4. The Law and public policy makers should ensure full compliance of the above or stand the risk of being sanctioned by the international organizations as signatories over ratified international treaties and conventions on elimination of discrimination and violence against women.
5. Lawmakers should of necessity re-visit the pending GEO Bill to fulfill her obligations of Nigerian Gender Policy, in order to create room for more women's inclusion in political participation.
6. Security Agencies to give special protection to women both politicians and non-partisans on election grounds who are constantly under threats during and after elections.

We finally call on all CSOs, NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs as community and society's watchdogs to give their voice and encourage them not to relent in advocating for gender equity in all public and private spaces for better governance. We commend the resilience and dexterity of committed women who were determined irrespective of the ill treatment received and its negative outcomes from their various political parties.

Our Engagements at the Community Level In 2018

2018 came with an increase in our level of engagements with communities around the five southeast states. Consultative meetings, community out reaches, capacity trainings, research works focused group discussions and advocacies were some of the activities that we engaged in at the community level. In February 2018 we engaged civil society organizations and media practitioners selected from across the southeast on a gender sensitivity capacity training at Ebonyi state towards demanding for and increasing reporting on 35% affirmative actions. We had 25 civil society organizations working on governance and 25 media practitioners from electronic, print, social media and radio at the training.



Figure 3 trainers and facilitators at the 2018 gender sensitivity training for media and CSOs



Figure 4 our gender sensitivity training at Ebonyi state, February 2018.



Figure 5 2018 International Women's Day Campaign.



Figure 6 International Women's Day Campaign to incorporate young women into political leadership





COMMUNICATIONS IN 2018

The Organisation's public relations has doubled, and the visibility of our work as Alliances for Africa has grown over these past months credits to the Communications team, headed by Mrs Chinwedu Anozie.

Our social media handles have experienced almost a 50% increase in just a few months, and our website traffic impressive.

The Communications team have put together campaign materials, flashcards and have been an integral part of the ongoing MacArthur anti-corruption campaign.

2019 promises to be a better year for the team and the work we do at Alliances for Africa.

2018 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Alliances for Africa and her board members had its second annual general board meeting at Oxygen Hotel and Resort Owerri, Imo state on Monday November 25, 2018. It is a statutory obligation for Alliances for Africa to hold an annual general meeting with its board members. Alliances for Africa board currently have seven (7) members which consists of five (5) females and two (2) males who bring on board diverse experience on international/regional Legal issues and litigation, policy and legislative processes, politics and governance and gender experts.



Members of the Board; L-R: Prince Ezeanyika, Chairperson, Maureen Ihejieta, Bella Ann



Mrs Ogechi giving a breakdown of Women in Government



Mrs Osai Ojigho giving a lecture on gender Justice



Mrs Blessing delivering a note



A cross-section of staff and board members



Institutionalizing Transparency and anti-Corruption in Southeast Nigeria

As kick off intervention for the MacArthur project on institutionalizing anti-corruption, accountability and transparency for good governance in Ebonyi and Enugu state in Southeast, Nigeria, Alliances for Africa held a consultative meeting as platform for discussion on strategies to tackle corruption among other issues in the two project states. The meeting had a fair representation of participants selected from among different sector of the communities in both project states. We had traditional rulers, persons living with disability, traditional rulers, and faith based organizations, Albinos, youths, students, security agency, civil society organizations and representatives from ministries, departments and agencies at the meeting.. Some of the highlight of the meeting include;

- Designing of score cards
- Designing citizen's report cards
- Identify sustainable tackling components
- Develop contents for drafting of the MOU for commitments by aspirants
- Establish citizen's watch dog and whistle blowers

We worked with participants to develop scorecards for scoring performance of elected officials in their local governments., citizen's report cards, identified sustainable tackling components, develop contents for drafting MOU for commitments by aspirants and established watch dogs and whistle blowers. In developing score card, participants agreed on the following scoring matrix; education, basic infrastructure, employment, security, accessibility, human resource development, health and economy. Accessibility of elected officials, level of engagement with community, accessibility of education, availability of basic infrastructure, employment rate, economy in terms of remuneration, taxation

and availability of foreign investors .Health, transparency in budget process, access to information and citizens engagement were all included in the scoring matrix developed by participants. The participants designed citizen's report card rating from excellent, very good, good, fair and poor. The following variables were adopted for designing the citizen report card; Policy implementation, project distribution and completion, 35% affirmative action, project sustainability, constituency projects, youth participation, provision of industries, human capital development. Health care delivery, power supply, accessibility, accountability, representation, constituency projects, commitment to constituency choice and designs, housing, security, transport system, tourism, agriculture, economic empowerment, open budget system, sustainable database for birth rate and death rate, and sports. In all, every program development by elected officials must absorb the needs of the marginalized in the society such as; disabled and women and girls and children. The following sustainable tracking components were identified; health, education and road network. Drafting of MOU for political leaders captured industrialization, designing programs that promote equality, provide life skill for persons living with disability, access to information, 35% affirmative action, establishment of committee to monitor and regulate aspirants, clear agreement on the number of terms in office, open budget system, payment of salary when due. Human right education, implementing the CCD(Community Charter of Demand) approach, establishment of state based debate group, discouraging voter inducement, state financial autonomy, periodic independent audit of public accounts and engagement with citizens at all level. These bodies were identified as watchdogs and whistle blowers; media, legislators, public complain commission, independent observers, town union presidents, traditional rulers, social institutions, religious bodies, town criers, schools and security agencies





OUR STAFF AND BOARD MEMBERS



Members of the Board; L-R: Bella Ann - member, Prince Ezeanyika - member, Maureen Ihejieta - Chairperson, Patricia Ojora - Member

Staff; L-R: Chinyere N, Ogechi I, Chinwendu A, Chioma I, Florence, Blessing Duru, Ihuoma A, Desmond, Israel PC,



OUR PARTNERS





About Alliances for Africa

AfA is an international African led non-governmental human right, peace and sustainable development organization. AfA works with partners in, around and beyond the continent of Africa. AfA was created to enhance and reconstruct the interface human right and development, with a vision to contributing innovatively to the task of tackling causes of endemic poverty and exclusion in Africa. AfA works with partners in, around and beyond the continent of Africa to advocate for the protection of human rights; promote women's participation in leadership and governance; build institutional capacity, advocate for gender justice, equality and non-discrimination, as well as promoting peace, security and conflict resolution interventions.

AfA works to interface local, national, sub-regional and international initiatives on human rights, peace, and sustainable development, acting as a facilitator for the generation, and dissemination of information within the field pertinent to Africa.

AfA's mission is to enhance and strengthen on a sustainable basis, local, national, sub-regional and international institutions in Africa, by being active in the monitoring, advancing, promoting and protection of human rights, peace, and sustainable development initiatives.



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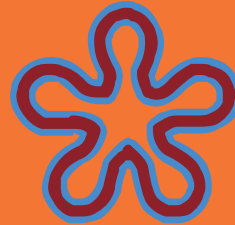
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