

The spark of passion

Dr. Arome Salifu

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to the resilient and visionary less privileged people of Africa — the dreamers, the builders, and the change-makers who refuse to be defined by limitations.

To those who dare to challenge the status quo, who rise above adversity, and who embrace leadership not as a privilege but as a responsibility — this is for you.

To my beloved family – my darling wife, Mrs. Abigail Arome Salifu, my children, Isaac, Abraham, and Ojima-ojo Bryan Arome Salifu, whose unwavering love and support have been my foundation.

To my mentors, colleagues and every hand that has lifted me along this journey, your faith in me has shaped my path.

And above all, to the Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF) — a beacon of hope, a testament to what is possible when passion meets purpose.

May this book ignite a flame in hearts, inspire action and remind us all that true leadership is service and true success is lifting others.

Acknowledgement

This book is a testament to the many individuals who have played significant roles in my journey.

First, I thank God Almighty for the gift of life, wisdom and strength to navigate this path.

To my parents; Mr. Andrew Salifu, my father, who instilled in me the importance of discipline, hard work and perseverance and to my mother, Mrs. Grace Mata Andrew, who with her steadfast support and nurturing spirit, provided the foundation upon which I built my character. To you both, I owe my upbringing and the values that have shaped my life.

To my siblings — both biological and step – siblings, you have all been a part of my story in unique ways. Your support, camaraderie and lessons have been invaluable.

I extend my deepest gratitude to my mentors, teachers and colleagues who guided and challenged me, pushing me to become better at every stage of my life.

To my team at Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF), your dedication and commitment to service have made our impact possible. This journey would not have been as fulfilling without the support of passionate and committed individuals who share my vision for a better Africa.

To my friends, supporters and well wishers, you have all played roles, big and small that have contributed to my growth and success. I appreciate you all.

Lastly, I express profound gratitude to all the donors, partners and international agencies that have believed in our work at AYGF. Your trust and investment in our mission have enabled us to reach thousands of vulnerable people, creating opportunities for a better future.

This book is dedicated to everyone who has been a part of my journey — this is our shared story!

Preface

I have always believed that true leadership is defined not by titles or positions but, by one's capacity to serve, take responsibility and to inspire positive change. My journey has been defined by an unwavering quest — a pursuit of knowledge, purpose and impact. From my formative years where I was raised on the enduring values of diligence and perseverance, each experience has deepened my understanding of what it means to lead with integrity and compassion.

This book is far more than a personal memoir. It is a reflection of vision, commitment and the transformative power of collective action. It is a narrative that speaks not only of my path but of the shared struggles and quiet triumphs of millions of vulnerable Africans who, despite immense obstacles, choose to rise and contribute meaningfully to their communities.

A defining moment in my life came with the realization that countless less - privileged Africans were not failing for lack of potential, but for lack of opportunity. I witnessed first hand the harsh realities that confront many young people: joblessness, limited access to quality education, debilitating poverty and the devastation due to rising insurgency, farmers – herders conflict, displacement and forced migration. As a result of this, many people have found themselves caught in a cycle of despair, hindered not by a lack of potential but by the absence of systemic support.

It was this awareness that ignited a deep resolve within me and led to the founding of the Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF) in 2003. What began as a modest initiative focused on youth empowerment has since evolved into a

dynamic, national and regional organization working

across Nigeria, Canada, the United States and Zambia. At the heart of our work lies a clear and compelling mission: To build an equitable society by fostering partnerships with state and non - state actors, driving engagements that ensure sustainable long - term outcomes.

Why This Book Matters.

I wrote this book not just to share my story but to inspire a new generation of leaders, change – makers and problem solvers. Africa is at a critical juncture. We are a continent with abundant resources and potential, yet we still grapple with poverty, unemployment and underdevelopment. The solution lies in empowering young people, fostering entrepreneurship and building resilient institutions.

This book is therefore, a call to action to governments, policymakers, international donors and every vulnerable African with a dream. We must invest in humanitarian services. We must prioritize education, job creation and good governance. We must break the cycles of poverty and dependency.

Through AYG and other platforms, I have dedicated my life to this mission. I hope that as you read this book, you will not only understand my journey but also feel inspired to take action in your own capacity.

No dream is too big. No challenge is insurmountable. With vision, resilience and the right support, we can transform lives and build a prosperous Africa.

This is not just my story. This is our story!

Dr. Arome Salifu.

Foreword

Wealth, titles or power do not define greatness. It is measured by the impact one leaves on humanity. In a world where many retreat into the comfort of silence, a few choose the path of courage, leading, serving and transforming lives. Arome Salifu is one of those few. His story is a powerful embodiment of steadfastness, leadership and an unwavering commitment to service.

From modest beginnings, Arome carved a path guided by purpose and conviction. He was never content with merely existing, he set out to change the world around him. A strong sense of responsibility marked his journey even in his early years. He took up leadership roles within his family and advocated for his peers with a maturity far beyond his age. Selfless service was not something he learned; it was something he lived.

As a young student, Arome's thirst for knowledge and passion for community development set him apart. His election as President of the Nigeria Economics Students Association (NESA) at Kogi State University, Anyigba, for two consecutive terms, was no accident. It was a testament to his ability to inspire trust, rally people behind a vision and drive meaningful change. For Arome, leadership was never about status or personal ambition but about making a difference.

This deep-seated commitment to societal transformation would later give birth to the Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF), an organization that has empowered thousands of young people and reshaped the landscape of humanitarian service across Africa and beyond. Through AYGF, Arome has secured international partnerships, created life-changing opportunities and championed

causes that give voice to the voiceless.

Yet, what truly sets Arome apart is not just his achievements but how he carries himself. His humility, integrity and relentless belief in the potential of vulnerable Africans define him even more than his accomplishments. To him, leadership is not a position; it is a duty. Success is not personal glory, but the number of lives touched and uplifted.

This book is more than a memoir. It is a call to action. A journey through the life of a man who refuses to accept limitations, a leader who believes no dream is too bold and no challenge insurmountable. As you turn these pages, prepare to be inspired, challenged and empowered.

Arome Salifu's story is a testament to what becomes possible when passion aligns with purpose. May his journey serve as a blueprint for aspiring leaders, a beacon of hope for the discouraged and a powerful reminder that true greatness lies in service to others.

Hussaini Abdu, Ph.D.

*Director, Pan - Africa and Emerging Power Office/
Representative to the African Union.*

*Save the Children International, Addis Ababa,
Ethiopia.*

Table of Contents

CHAPTER ONE: Fons et origo of Resilience – My early life and family background.	11
CHAPTER TWO: The Birth of a Vision – AYGF's Early Days.	18
CHAPTER THREE: Catalysts For Change: AYGF's Thematic Focus For Sustainable Development.	31
CHAPTER FOUR: Expanding The Mission – AYGF's Growth And Impact.	77
CHAPTER FIVE: A Life of Purpose: Philanthropy, Social Change and the Power of Giving Back.	94
CHAPTER SIX: A Legacy Of Impact And The Road Ahead.	103
FINAL NOTE.	106
APPENDIX.	107

Educational Background.

Career Highlights and Leadership Roles. List of Awards and Recognitions.

AYGF's Grants, Major Projects Secured and Impact. Certifications, Memberships and Professional Affiliations.

Chapter One

Fons et Origo of Resilience – My early life and family background.

I was born on March 6, 1980, in Abocho, a quiet town in Biraidu District of Dekina Local Government Area of Kogi State, Nigeria. My father, Andrew Salifu, was a Forestry Officer — what we called 'Agoli' in our native dialect. During his years in office, he was responsible for managing and conserving forest resources. He ensures the protection and management of forests and also oversees the work of his subordinates, making ensure that everyone performs their duties effectively. My mother, Grace Mata Andrew on the other hand, was a Restaurateur and a strong – willed woman, whose discipline and sturdiness played a significant role in shaping the person I have become.

I grew up in a polygamous family because my father had more than one wife and I had several step – brothers and a step – sister. While some might see this as a complex family setup, for me, it was a lesson in unity and inclusion. As the eleventh of seventeen children, I learned earlier on that leadership starts with responsibility. My siblings and I shared everything from food to daily chores and we were raised to look out for one another. Much of my early childhood was spent with my maternal grandparents, Pa Echiye Ameh and Uwawo Echiye. At the age of five, I was sent to live with them in a small village called Oko-Ate, within the Biraidu district. It was there that I first started schooling at Ajonoja Community Primary School, attending classes one and two before moving to L.G.E.A. Primary School, Abocho, to continue my education. This decision to

live with my grandparents would shape my understanding of discipline, responsibility and cultural value system.

Pa Echiye, was a wise and highly respected man in the community. He believed that hard work was the key to a better future and he made sure that I understood the importance of diligence. However, life with him was not just about pedagogy; it was a well – rounded experience that instilled in me a deep appreciation for drudgery. My daily routine involved assisting him on the farm, joining hunting expeditions and going to the stream to play, bathe and collect water for my grandmother. In fact , I was a typical village boy, fully immersed in the rhythms of rural life.

One of the acme of my childhood experiences was my love for traditional masquerade festivals. I was an ardent admirer of our local festivals and whenever the masquerades came out, my peers and I would excitedly follow them, dancing and clapping as the drums echoed through the village. To me, these festivals were not just an entertainment; they were a cultural heritage that connected us to our roots and strengthened our sense of identity.

And after I returned to my parents, during major festivities like Christmas celebration, my parents made sure they buy new clothes for us – the children. These moments brought immense joy, as we paraded our new outfits with pride. These were simple gestures, but they instilled in me the importance of generosity and the happiness that comes from a thoughtful giving. After completing my primary education, I was taken to meet my elder sister, Juli, (now late), in Anyigba, where I began my secondary education at Commercial Secondary School. However, after my sister Juli got married, we both moved to Lokoja where I continued my schooling at Army Day Secondary School, Army Barracks, from JSS 2 until I graduated.

A Childhood shaped by Responsibility and Early Lessons in Service.

From as far back as I can remember, responsibility was never something I could shy away from. Growing up in a large family, I learned that every person had a role to play, there was no room for idleness. My parents believed in hard work, discipline and unity. They instilled these values in us from an early age.

Even as a child, I was drawn to leadership — not because I wanted recognition but because I felt a deep need to serve, to take initiative and to ensure that things were done the right way. I was never the type who stand back and watch when something needed to be done. Whether it was helping my mother organize household chores, assisting my younger siblings with school work or taking charge of small tasks within the household, I always felt a natural pull toward responsibility.

One of my earliest memories of leadership came when I was living with my late elder sister. Being under her care meant adhering to strict discipline but, it also gave me the opportunity to take on responsibilities that many children my age would not have been trusted with, it was while living with her that I learned how to cook. Also, at school, I quickly became known as someone who could be relied upon, both by my teachers and my classmates. I had innate passion for service – I enjoyed taking charge of group assignments, mentoring younger students and even mediating small disputes among my peers.

Army Day Secondary School had a unique atmosphere, discipline steeped in military – style and orderliness were

order of the day. Students were expected to be punctual, responsible and hardworking, the school environment suited me well because I had already been raised with a strong work principles. I did not see rules as restrictions; rather, I saw them as tenets that helped shape a person's character. The experience reinforced what I had already learned from home: the importance of self – discipline and personal accountability. I became actively involved in school activities, taking on roles that required leadership and responsibility. My teachers recognized this and often placed me in positions where I had to organize my fellow students, handle assignments beyond the classroom and also joined the school military cadet. By the time I was in my senior years in school, leadership had become second nature to me. I was never afraid to speak up when something needed to be done and I took it upon myself to assist anyone in any way I could, in fact, I embraced every opportunity to serve.

Looking back, I realize that my childhood and early youth were a training ground for the path I would later take in life. Every small tasks I engaged, every stewardship role I assumed and every lesson I learned about service and commitment prepared me for the greater challenges ahead. It was during these formative years that the foundations of my initiatives were laid and it was here that I first understood what it truly meant to lead — not for personal gain, but for the betterment of others.

Education as a Pathway – My academic journey, Growth and Early Opportunities to Contribute

From an early age, I understood that education was not just a routine or societal expectation, it was a gateway to opportunities beyond what I had known. I saw first hand the power of knowledge and I realized that education was

the key to not just surviving but thriving. However, in my hometown of Abocho, Kogi State, access to quality education was not always easy, many children especially, from rural backgrounds faced obstacles that made completing school a challenge. Some lacked financial support, others had to contribute to family businesses to make up for school fees and some simply did not see the value of education beyond basic literacy level. But for me, learning was never negotiable, it was my pathway to stewardship and change.

Right from when I began my secondary education at Commercial Secondary School, Anyigba, I realized a deeper immersion into a world that demanded discretion, self control and ambition. When the time came to pursue higher education, my path led me to Kogi State University, Anyigba, where I enrolled into the Department of Economics. University life was different from anything I had experienced before. Unlike in the secondary school where formations were clearly defined, in the university, self - motivation is required. It was an environment where only those with focus and determination could truly stand out. From my first year, I saw the need for a strong sense of direction among the students. there were pressing issues, students needed a voice to represent them, advocate for their welfare, and push for better academic policies. With my passion for service and my natural inclination toward leadership, I contested for and won the seat of President of the Nigerian Economics Students Association, Kogi State University chapter, unopposed. Winning the presidency was a defining moment. Holding the position for two consecutive years as an undergraduate was a privilege. It meant that students trusted me to represent their interests, liaise with university authorities and ensure that their voices were heard.



Arome Salifu delivering speech at the maiden edition of AYG Pan-African Youth Conference organized in collaboration with the then Federal Ministry of Cooperation and Integration together with the Institute of Peace and Conflict Resolution in Abuja (2005)

Balancing academics with leadership was not easy. There were nights I spent drafting proposals, writing letters or resolving student conflicts instead of focusing solely on my studies. But the experience taught me invaluable lessons — how to negotiate, how to lead under pressure and most importantly, how to remain committed to a cause despite challenges.

Beyond lectures and student politics, my university years exposed me to broader societal issues. I became deeply aware of the struggles of many young people in Nigeria, graduates who could not find jobs, students who struggled to pay their fees, and communities where education was still a luxury rather than a right. This awareness fueled my resolve to do more than just succeed academically. I wanted to create impact, to be part of the solution rather than just another graduate searching for opportunities. It was this mindset that would later influence my journey into development work and policy advocacy.

By the time I completed my degree in Economics (2003), I was no longer just a student, I was a neoteric, an advocate,

and a young man with a clear vision for the future. My time at Kogi State University has given me the confidence and the platform to believe that change was possible and that leadership was not just about holding positions but about creating solutions and improving lives. Education had indeed been my pathway, not just for personal growth but for a greater purpose — one that would shape the rest of my life.

Chapter Two

The Birth of a Vision (AYGF's Early Days)

My years in school had shaped my world view, deepened my understanding of societal challenges, and most importantly, awakened in me a strong sense of direction. I had seen the struggles of young people with brilliant minds wasting away due to a lack of opportunity, families torn apart by poverty, and entire communities hindered by the absence of basic infrastructure. I knew that true leadership was not about titles or positions but about identifying problems and creating solutions. I wanted to be part of something greater than myself, something that would outlive me. And so, the seed of what would later become the Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF) was planted in my heart.

Long before AYGF was officially established, my passion for the transformation of lives was evident. Even as a student leader, I had worked tirelessly to create opportunities for my peers, whether by organizing career seminars, facilitating access to mentorship, or advocating for policies that benefited students. I saw firsthand that young people had immense potential, but many lacked guidance, opportunities, or the right platforms to thrive. After graduation, I could have chosen a conventional path, pursuing a corporate job, seeking government employment, or traveling abroad for further studies. But deep down, I knew my purpose lay elsewhere. I wanted to build an institution that would empower young people, drive economic growth, and transform communities. The journey was not easy. I had no financial backing, no office space, and no organizational structure. All I had was a burning

vision and an unshakable belief that something could be done.

Laying the Foundation for AYGF

In 2003, I officially founded the Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF). It started as a small initiative with a handful of passionate young people who shared my vision. We had no funding, no formal recognition, and very little external support. But we had something even more valuable - a relentless commitment to making a difference.

We began by engaging with communities, listening to their needs, and designing grassroots programs aimed at transforming lives. One of our first major focuses was education and skills development. We organized training sessions, empowerment programs, and career workshops to equip young people with the skills they needed to become self-reliant.



Arome Salifu as a resource person in a conference organized by the then Federal Ministry of Cooperation and Integration in Africa flanked by Ambassador (Dr.) Alhaji Maitama Sule and top government officials of the ministry.

Despite our passion, challenges were overwhelming. There were times when I had to personally fund activities, sacrificing my comfort to keep the vision alive. Convincing people to believe in a newly founded organization was not easy, especially in a country where skepticism about NGOs

was common. But I refused to be discouraged. The turning point for AYGF came when we began to attract small-scale partnerships. Our grassroots efforts started gaining recognition, and organizations began to take notice of the impact we were making. We secured our first set of small grants and collaborations, which allowed us to expand our reach.

With each milestone, our work grew stronger. We expanded into new areas, focusing not just on education but also on Public Health, Good Governance, Environment and Climate Change, Nutrition and Food Security, Migration, Livelihood, Peace and Conflict Resolution, and Education. From a small initiative, AYGF was evolving into a structured national and regional organization with a clear vision and mission.

A Vision That Transcends Borders

What started as a local initiative in Nigeria soon gained national, regional, and international recognition. AYGF was no longer just about one country, it became a platform for driving socio-economic development across Africa and beyond. As the years passed, our impact multiplied. AYGF expanded into multiple countries, partnering with international organizations and governments to implement life-changing projects. Our work became a beacon of hope for thousands.

Reflecting on those early days, I realize that the journey of AYGF is a testament to resilience, passion, and the power of a single vision. What started as a dream has now provided employment opportunities for thousands of youths across Nigeria, Africa, and even in America. But this is just the beginning. The work is far from over. Each day presents new challenges, but also new opportunities to make a

difference. AYGF is more than an organization — it is a movement, a call to action for all who believe in the power of transforming lives through sustainable change.



Arome Salifu with the Former US Ambassador to Nigeria in Abuja.

Anatomy of an Effective Non-Profit Organization. Using AYGF as a Case Study.

Every successful non-profit organization, particularly those navigating the complexities of development work across continents, must strike a delicate balance between compassion and competence, that is, between heart and structure. Throughout my time leading AYGF, I have gained insights that no matter how compelling the mission or how passionate the team, the key to long-term success lies in a well-structured organization.

This chapter offers a practical, in-depth look into the anatomy of a model non-profit organization, structured not

just for functionality but for impact, resilience, and continuous learning. Drawing from AYGF's experience, I will illustrate how a system that is grounded in professional ideals, people- centered practices, and visionary governance can deliver sustainable results for the vulnerable populations.

Building the Foundation: Structure for Purpose

A non-profit organization must begin with questions such as: Why do we exist, and how do we plan to serve? Purpose must be followed by architecture (structures and systems designed) to transform vision into measurable outcomes. At AYGF, we started small but our foundation was intentional. Our system is hinged on five core values:

- ***Integrity.***
- ***Transparency.***
- ***Equity.***
- ***Mutual Respect.***
- ***Professionalism.***

These standards guide not only our operations but our identity. As we grew from a national initiative in Nigeria to a regional force in Canada, the U.S., and Zambia, our structure evolved, but our values remained.

The Board of Trustees

An ideal non-profit organization begins with good governance. For instance, AYGF's governance is anchored by an 8-member Board of Trustees comprised of professionals from academia, law, finance, development, and civil society. Their roles include:

- Quarterly oversight meetings to assess progress.
- Approving strategic plans, budgets, and partnerships.
- Providing fiduciary and ethical guidance.
- Ensuring organizational alignment with its mission.

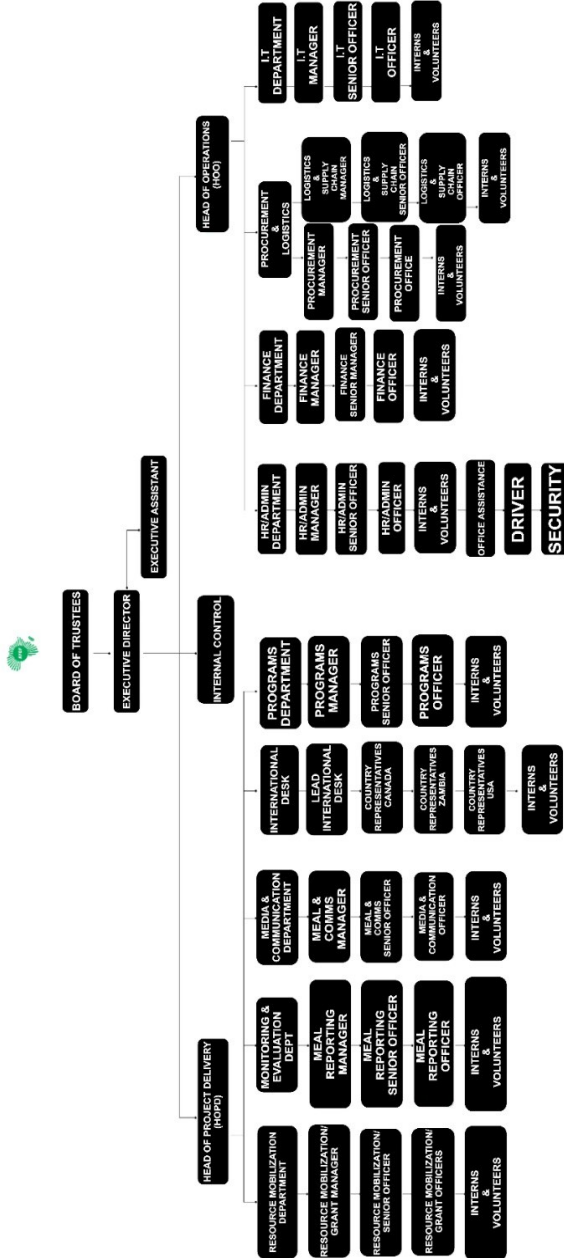
This board operates independently from the day - to - day management of the organization, ensuring checks and balances while supporting the organization with sound counsel and institutional memory.

Office of the Executive Director

Depending on the specific structure and culture of the NGO, at the helm of the organization is the Office of the Executive Director, Chief Executive Officer, Managing Director, or Country Director. This office serves as a nexus of strategy, diplomacy, innovation, and executive action. Some more responsibilities in this role include:

- Institutional representation at national and international levels.
- Policy formulation and oversight.
- Staff mentoring and culture - building.
- Leading crisis response and advocacy efforts.

The office also promotes participatory leadership — a model where ideas flow from all levels of the organization. It has fostered innovation and staff ownership of results.



Human Resources Department

An organization is only as effective as its staff. The HR Department is designed not just to manage employees but to cultivate leaders. Its structure includes:

- Open and transparent recruitment processes.
- Gender and diversity inclusiveness.
- Clear onboarding and orientation systems.
- Periodic appraisals and promotions based on performance.
- Wellness and mental health programs.

The HR department is where organizational culture is built. From the Staff Handbook to grievance redress mechanisms, every HR policy is aligned with the organization's commitment to dignity and fairness.

Programs Department

The Programs Department is the engine room of execution. It handles:

- Design and delivery of interventions across all thematic areas.
- Coordination between national offices and regional teams.
- Community engagement and partnership building.
- Field logistics and technical support.

For example, at AYGF, this department implements projects on education, health, livelihood, climate change, governance and migration, among others.

Administration & Finance Department

As long as Financial accountability is paramount in the NGO sector, the Admin. & Finance department ensures:

- Annual budgeting and monthly forecasting.
- Donor compliance, audits and reporting.
- Transparent procurement and asset tracking.
- Transition to real - time accounting systems.

This department operates with integrity, ensuring donor confidence and resource optimization.

Communications Department

In every non-profit organization, the Communications department is the narrative force. Their functions include:

- Managing media and stakeholder communications.
- Creating press releases, newsletters, and social media content.
- Documenting impact stories and visual media.
- Branding and crisis communication.

- This department also ensures that the world hears about the impact of the organization.

Business Development & Partnership Department

A non - profit organization's sustainability depends on the ability to build long - term partnerships. This department is responsible for:

- Grant scouting and proposal development.
- Donor relations and reporting.
- Building alliances with private, governmental and multilateral bodies.
- Creating synergies for co - implementation and resource sharing.

AYGF has secured funding and partnerships from organizations like WFP, UNODC, ECOWAS, the EU, the World Bank, Islamic Development Bank and USAID through this unit.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability & Learning (MEAL)

No organization can improve what it does not measure. The MEAL department is responsible for:

- Developing project log - frames and KPIs.
- Collecting data using mobile tools.

- Hosting feedback sessions and reflection workshops.
- Producing evidence - based recommendations for future projects.

MEAL also ensures that lessons are not lost and that successes are scalable.

Procurement and Logistics Department

This department manages the flow of goods, services and materials. Key functions of this unit include:

- Procurement planning and vendor management.
- Logistics for project implementation.
- Inventory control and warehouse management.
- Distribution of humanitarian items.

Procurement integrity is enforced through manuals, ethics codes and a strict value - for - money policy.

Legal Affairs Department

Every operation is backed by legality. This unit manages:

- MOUs, partnership contracts and intellectual property.
- Dispute resolution and litigation management.

- Labor law compliance across countries.
- Risk assessment and mitigation.

Research and Development (R&D)

To innovate, an NGO must generate knowledge. The R&D department:

- Conducts feasibility studies and stakeholder analysis.
- Publishes policy briefs and development models.
- Hosts symposia and think tank roundtables.

Some Institutional Practices and Continuous Improvement in the Non-Profit Organization

Generally, it is believed that for every non-profit organization to evolve, it must embrace:

- Digitized platforms (MIS, CRM, HRIS).
- E - learning and knowledge management systems.
- Institutional policy audits and revisions.
- Biannual organizational performance reviews.
- Staff retreats and wellness weeks.

All of these features ensure that the organization stays agile and future-proof.

Organizational Culture and Professional Values

What binds various departments within an NGO together is culture. Some of these values include: Professionalism in service and interaction, Compassion- Equity for beneficiaries, Integrity in all dealings, and Impact as North Star.

The anatomy of an effective non-profit organization, as demonstrated using AYG as a typical illustration, is not a static chart or an organogram on paper. It is a living cum breathing ecosystem. More so, when structures are aligned with vision and values, the result is an organization that not only delivers services but also transforms lives.

This model is replicable and with the right systems, any mission-driven initiative can move from vision to impact deliberately, sustainably, and humanely.

Chapter Three

Catalysts for Change: AYGF's Thematic Focus for Sustainable Development

This chapter offers a deep dive into each thematic focus, justifying AYGF's commitment to these domains and illustrating the organization's work through key projects. It also serves as a compelling call to action for international donors, development partners, and governmental agencies to support AYGF in scaling its impact across Africa and beyond.

Over the years, Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF) has evolved from a grassroots youth-led initiative to a regional force addressing some of the most pressing issues affecting Africa and its diaspora. With a strategic commitment to 8 thematic areas — Migration, Education, Livelihood, Peace and Conflict Resolution, Environment and Climate Change, Public Health, Governance, Nutrition and Food Security. AYGF aligns its interventions with global development goals while tailoring them to local realities. These thematic areas are not arbitrary; they reflect a careful analysis of Africa's developmental needs, AYGF's capacity to deliver impact, and the interconnected nature of modern humanitarian and development challenges.

The documented achievements are presented in a structured manner to reflect the scope of interventions, the stakeholders involved, targeted beneficiaries, the implementation processes, and results. Through data visualization tools such as charts, tables, and graphs, this chapter provides clear evidence of progress, challenges

addressed, and the impact on the target population. The goal is to offer a comprehensive and evidence-driven account of developmental strides that have been made, while setting the foundation for future interventions and policy engagement.

Public Health

Africa continues to grapple with high burdens of communicable and non-communicable diseases, weak health systems, and limited access to quality healthcare services. Public health is foundational to all other development goals; without it, education, economic productivity, and social stability falter. AYGF's health interventions are designed to support national efforts and provide equitable healthcare services, especially to underserved populations.

Key Interventions

AYGF has implemented various public health projects to address pressing health challenges in the society. For instance, our malaria prevention initiatives include support to the Malaria Elimination Project in Edo State, which involves the distribution of insecticide-treated nets (ITNs), rapid diagnostic tests to diagnose malaria quickly, providing access to effective antimalarial medications for treatment, effective case management, community campaigns, promoting behavioral change and awareness on malaria prevention.

In addition to this, AYGF has executed the Global Fund OVC project, providing home-based care services to vulnerable children and adolescents in Benue, Niger, Borno, Bayelsa, and Akwa-Ibom States. The project focused on

managing stigmatization, fostering linkages with healthcare facilities, and promoting gender equality and equity through sensitization and training.

Our Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH), initiatives prioritize improving access to safe water, sanitation, and hygienic services in underserved communities through innovative and sustainable solutions. In partnership with local organizations, AYGF has conducted public health awareness campaigns with emphasis on community led sanitation, water supply management, and capacity building for in-school children and community members in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Benue, Sokoto, and Katsina states. Additionally, the organization has provided hand hygiene equipment for school students in the FCT and implemented cholera sensitization campaigns in selected secondary schools across Benue, Katsina states, and the FCT.

Moreover, AYGF has implemented Community-Based Nutrition Services under the World Bank's Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria (ANRiN) Project, significantly improving maternal and child health across northern

Nigeria. The project was implemented across a broad area, reaching 139 wards in 13 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Niger State, 111 wards in 10 LGAs of Kogi State, and 170 wards in 16 LGAs of Katsina State. Through a network of trained health workers and robust community outreach programs, the project ensured that essential nutrition services reached the target populations in need of critical support. The project was launched in June 2021, and rounded up in July 2024, successfully reaching 894,598 individuals in Niger State, 695,745 in Kogi State, and 495,771 in Katsina state, a total of 2,086,114 beneficiaries across the three states

in Nigeria:.

In relation to the ANRiN project was an Innovation that focused on producing Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food (RUTF) made from locally sourced ingredients. The initiative not only aims to improve the nutrition and survival of infants and young children but also provides an opportunity for income generation for the women involved, as the food product can be sold to other members of the community.

Education



Excutive Director, presenting education materials to a beneficiary of the Bloom Project

Education is a fundamental human right and a key driver of personal, social, and economic development. However, Nigeria faces significant educational challenges, including access barriers, quality concerns, and disparities, leaving

over 20 million children without education, with girls being disproportionately affected (UNICEF, 2024).



Beneficiaries of the Bloom Project



AYGF staff participating in the Bloom Project

Key Interventions

AYGF launched the Bridging Learning Opportunities for Out-of-School Minors (BLOOM) project, which aligns with

Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). The BLOOM project focuses on improving access to education, enhancing teacher capacity, and providing infrastructural support to create a conducive learning environment. By leveraging existing Almajiri schools, the project aims to empower out-of-school children, enabling them to reach their full potential and contribute to a brighter future for Nigeria. The project has set ambitious goals, including returning 2 million out-of-school children to quality education within the next 5 years, enhancing the capacity of 100,000 teachers, and benefiting 700,000 households through conditional cash transfers to reduce financial barriers to education. During the project launch, however, AYGF provided hundreds of children at risk of dropping out of school with access to quality education through scholarships, provision of learning materials, including school bags, pens, and exercise books.



Arame Salifu addressing press conference on Kidnap of school children and its impact on education

Good Governance

Corruption, weak institutions, and a lack of transparency plague many African nations. These governance failures stifle development, breed inequality, and fuel conflict. AYGf recognizes that civic education and youth engagement in governance are essential for fostering accountable leadership.

Key Interventions

Through civic engagement projects, town hall meetings, and policy dialogues, AYGf has empowered thousands of youths to participate in governance processes. In collaboration with the European Union, the organization implemented a project to train border officials on Labour Law and Human Rights, promoting the rule of law and institutional reform.

Additionally, AYGf implemented the Mutual Accountability and Community Scorecard Initiative (MACSI) project, funded by International Alert in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and Edo State. The initiative aimed to strengthen police-community relations with the objective of improving knowledge of civic responsibilities among the community members and the police.

Environment and Climate Change

Africa is disproportionately affected by climate change despite contributing the least to global emissions. Rising temperatures, erratic rainfall, desertification, and drought are pressing environmental concerns affecting millions globally, posing significant threats to ecosystem balance, biodiversity, and human well-being. Fortunately, nature offers a powerful solution: trees. Through their roots, trees

enhance soil quality, improve water retention, and provide shade and habitats for diverse species. In recognition of the critical role trees play in mitigating desertification, drought, and earth restoration, AYGf, in partnership with Prinrite Foundation for Sustainable Environment and Education, commemorated World Environment Day and World Earth Day for Combating Desertification and Drought with the Earth Restoration Campaign - a tree planting initiative.



Arome Salifu on a courtesy visit to the then Minister for Environment, Dr. Izaq Adekunle Salako in Abuja.

Key Interventions

The Initiative raised awareness among young students about the crucial role trees play in combating desertification, drought, and promoting Earth restoration. It encouraged active participation in tree planting and environmental conservation, instilling a sense of environmental responsibility among young people. A thousand trees were planted across various schools in the FCT.

Nutrition and Food Security

Food insecurity and malnutrition remain critical challenges across Africa, especially in conflict-affected and rural areas. Poor nutrition weakens immunity, impairs learning, and limits economic productivity.

Key Interventions



Vibrant scene of AYGF team members actively working within a rural community as part of their initiative to improve child nutrition

Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria (ANRiN)

Nigeria faces alarmingly high rates of malnutrition, which vary significantly across different regions of the country. Stunting, a key indicator of chronic malnutrition, along with micronutrient deficiencies, represents the most pressing issues. Since 2008, stunting rates have seen little change, highlighting a persistent nutritional crisis.

Currently, one in three children under five—approximately 13.9 million—suffers from chronic malnutrition, putting them at risk of severe health consequences and hindering their development.



AYGF Community health workers on a door-to-door approach engaging beneficiaries in their homes to educate families on health, hygiene, and nutrition while providing essential medical support. This personalized approach ensures that even the most vulnerable community members receive the knowledge and resources needed for a healthier future.

Malnutrition is a global challenge impacting health, economies, and human capital development. It contributes significantly to mortality, morbidity, poor cognitive development, and poor performance in education of children, low productivity, and non-communicable disease in adulthood. Malnutrition has continued to be a problem of public health significance in Niger State with the indices of about 53% of under-five deaths and a high prevalence of stunting (28.2%), wasting (4.7%), and underweight (14.4%) among children under the age of five. Only 12.7 per cent of new-born are breastfed within one hour of birth, and 27.4% of children aged 6-23 months met the minimum diet diversity requirement. Also, an estimated 75.0 per cent of

children less than five years of age and 64.2 per cent of women of reproductive age (WRA) in the state have been reported to be anaemic.

AYGF's overall mandate was to deliver quality nutrition services to pregnant women, lactating mothers, caregivers and children 6-59 months of age. These nutrition services are Vitamin A supplementation, provision of Albendazole (deworming) tablets, Iron-folic acid supplementation, MIYCN counselling, Zinc/ORS supplementation Sulfadoxine pyrimethamine dose for intermittent preventive therapy (IPT) and Micronutrient powder (MNP).

Objective of AYGF was to:

- ◆ Enhance the usage of quality, cost-effective basic package of nutrition services (BPNS) for pregnant and lactating women, and children under the age of five in 13 LGA/139 Wards.
- ◆ To Build the capacity of project implementers and promote knowledge-sharing.
- ◆ To promote social and behavioural change and health-seeking behaviour among direct and indirect beneficiaries.
- ◆ To Strengthen existing relevant community health structures to enhance service delivery, ownership and sustainability.
- ◆ Influence behavioural change that improves exclusive, and continued Breastfeeding, appropriate complementary feeding, and early stimulation

States Where ANRiN Project Was Implemented: Niger,

Kogi and Katsina States.

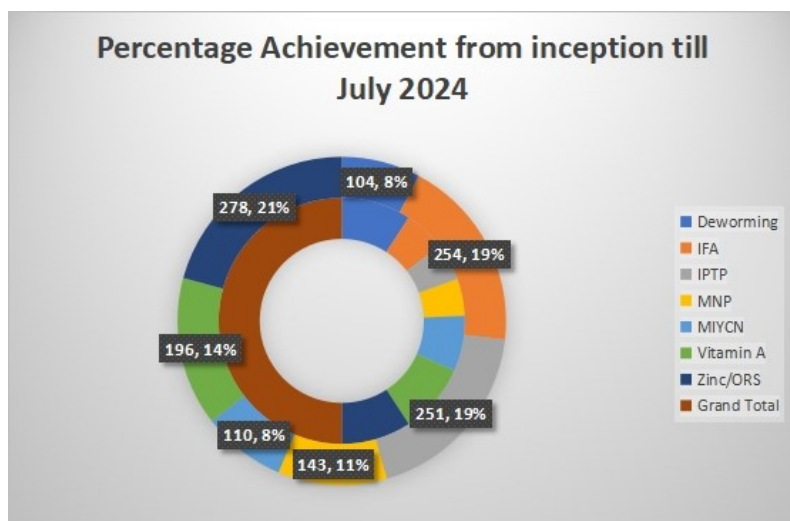
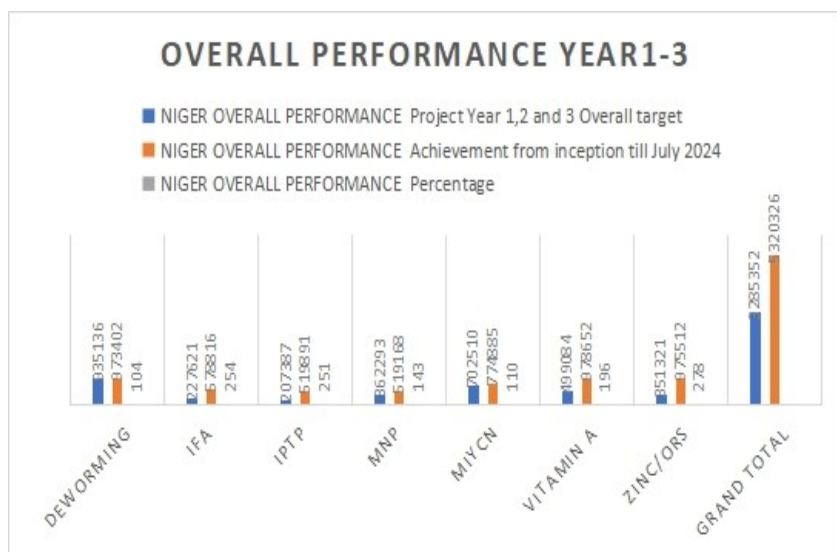
Achievement for Niger State

The project was implemented in 13 LGAs of the state namely; Mokwa, Bida, Gbako, Lavun, Lapai, Agaie, Edati, Chanchaga, Bosso, Gurara, Tafa, Suleja and Katcha.

Performance across services for Niger State from July 2021 – July 2024.

NIGER OVERALL PERFORMANCE			
Service	Project Year 1,2 and 3 Over-all target	Achievement from inception till July 2024	Percentage
Deworming	935136	973402	104
IFA	227621	578816	254
IPTP	207387	519891	251
MNP	362293	519168	143
MIYCN	702510	774885	110
Vitamin A	499084	978652	196
Zinc/ORS	351321	975512	278
Grand Total	3285352	5320326	

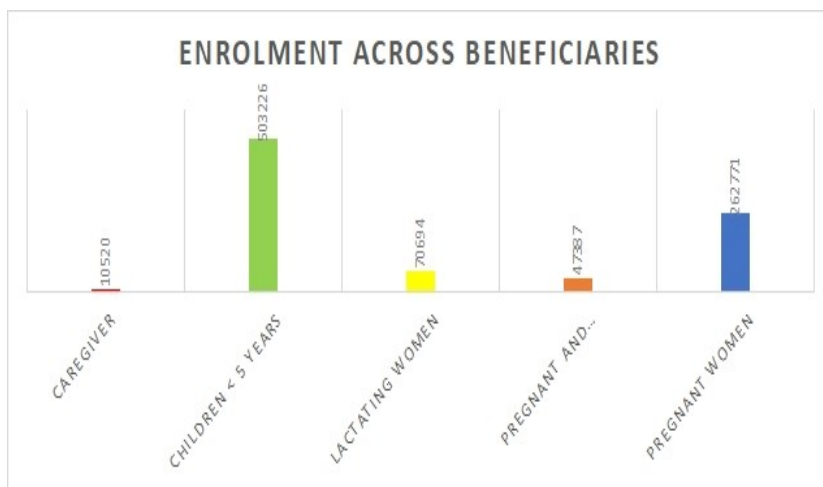
The table represents the performance across the seven services compared to the given targets for the period under review. ZINC/ORS service for prevention of diarrhoea accounted for 278% thereby topping the chart, followed by IFA with 254%, IPTp with 251%, Vitamin A with 196%, MNP with 143%, MIYCN with 110%, and 104% deworming achieved.



Enrolment and service provided

From the inception of the ANRiN Project, A total of **Eight hundred and Ninety-four thousand, five hundred and ninety-eight (894,598)** beneficiaries were enrolled and serviced with the various nutrition intervention, the bar chart below provides details on the enrolment across the beneficiary types

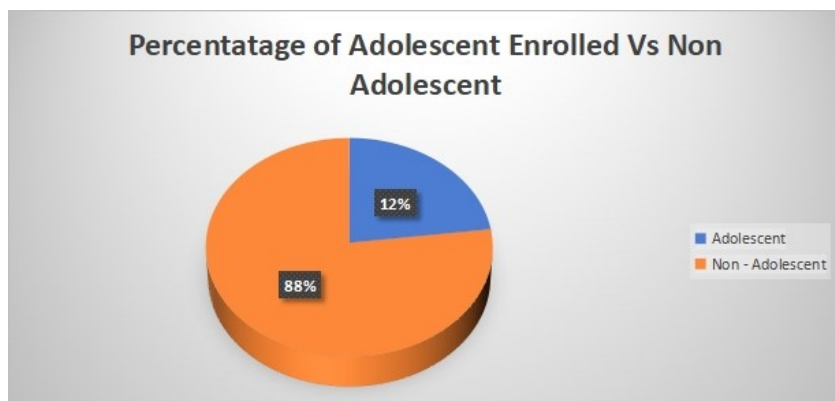
The bar chart revealed that Children under five years old have the highest enrolment at 503226, accounting for 56% of the total, followed by pregnant women, who make up 262771 (29%) of the total enrolees. Lactating women make up 70694 (8%) of the total enrolments, while pregnant and lactating women make up 5%, with 47387 enrolees. Caregivers have the lowest enrolments, making up just 1% of the 10520 enrolees. Several reasons such as high target allotment for service involving children and the high frequency of contact for these group contributed to this disparity



Data Source: ANRiN Backend Database Server, July 2021 – 31st July, 2024

Adolescent vs non-adolescent beneficiaries enrolled and serviced

The pie chart below depicts the enrolments percentages of non-adolescent and adolescent women of reproductive age. Adolescent beneficiaries made up 12% and non-adolescents comprising the remaining 88%. This reflects significant success recorded for adolescent enrolment, which requires that at least 10% of total enrolment for women in all category must be adolescent.



Data Source: ANRiN Backend Database Server, July 2021 – 31st July, 2024

Categories of women adolescent beneficiary's vs non-adolescent beneficiaries enrolled and serviced

The table below shows the percentage of enrolled adolescents compared to non-adolescent beneficiaries. Among the adolescent types, pregnant women enrolled account for 13%, lactating women 9%, pregnant & lactating women account for the highest percentage of 15%, while caregivers with 9%. This suggest that adolescent mothers who were lactating were also found to be pregnant.

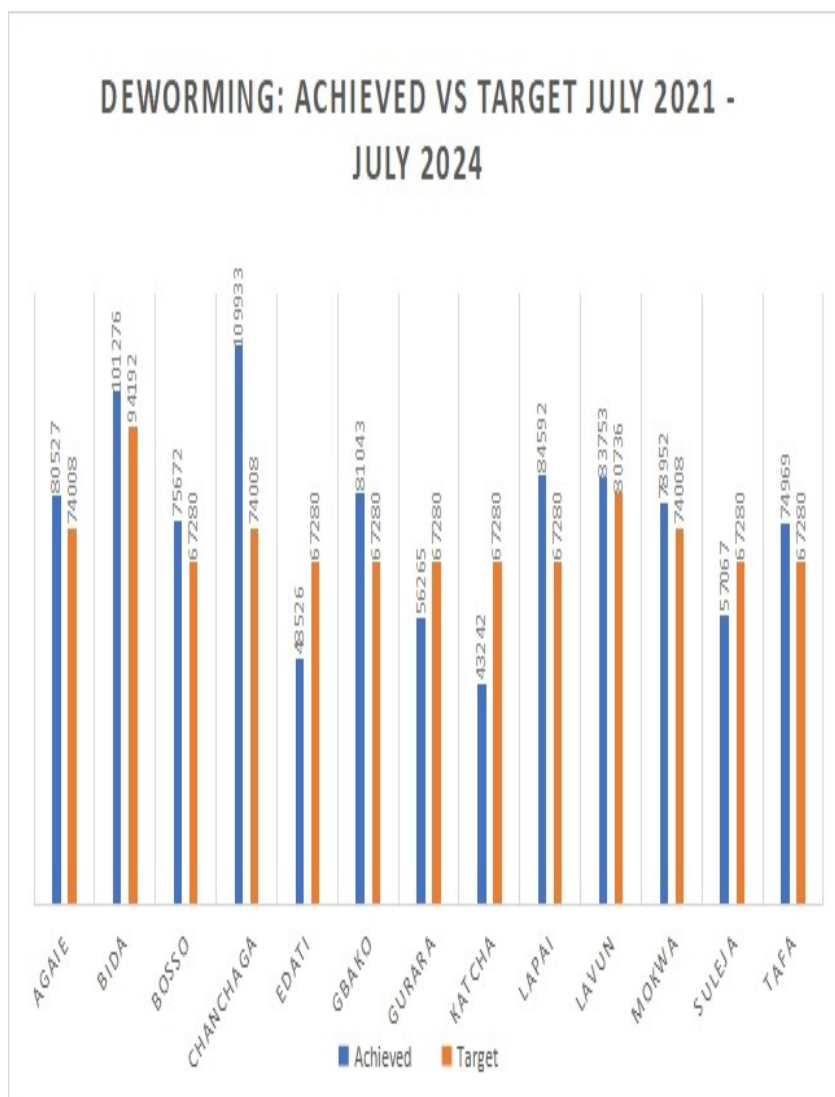
S/ N o	Benefi- ciary Type	Ado- lescent	Non - Adoles- cent	To- tal	% Ad- olesc ent Moth- ers
1	Pregnant women	32898	229582	262, 480	13
2	Lactat- ing wom- en	6295	63892	70,1 87	9
3	Pregnant & Lactat- ing wom- en	6984	40362	47,3 46	15
3	Caregiv- er	762	8155	8,91 7	9

Data Source: ANRiN Backend Database Server, July 2021 – 31st July, 2024

Service achievement across LGAs

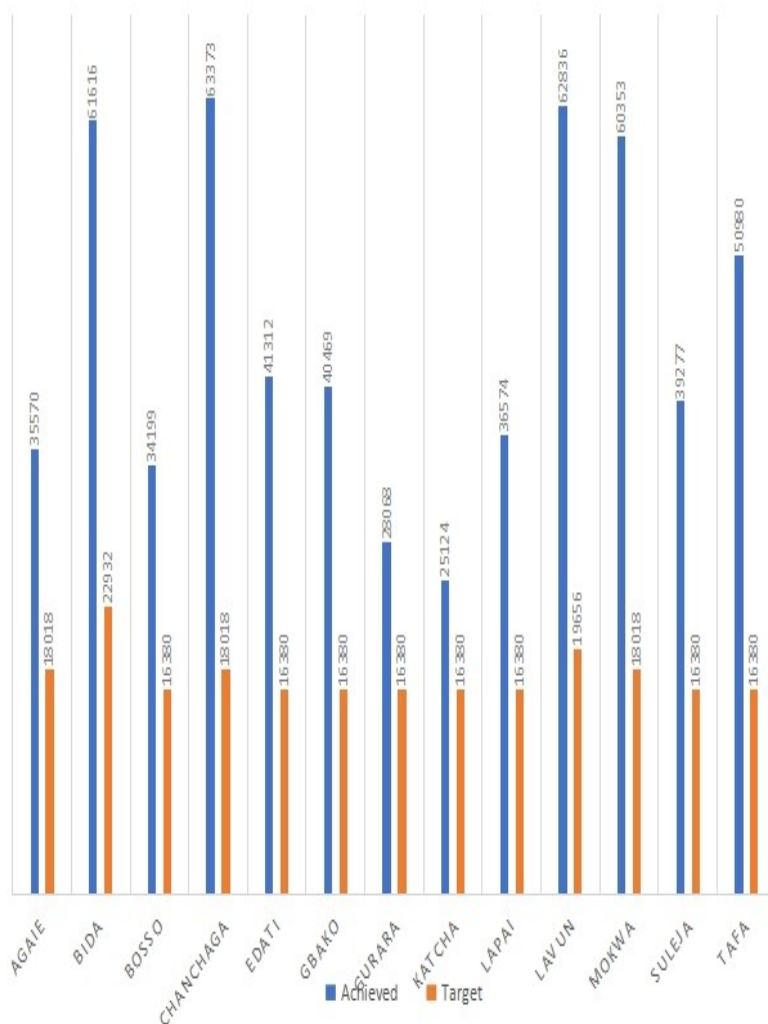
The sets of bar charts below represent implementation milestone of all the thirteen (13) LGAs across the seven BPNS services for the entire period of implementation. From the analysis below, it could be seen that triangulating performance against target, services like deworming, MNP and MIYCN, were not 100% achieved in LGAs like Gurara, Edati and Katcha compared to other LGAs who even surpassed the target. This result could be as result of poor capacity of CVs, interference from socio-cultural and

political factors e.t.c experienced in location.

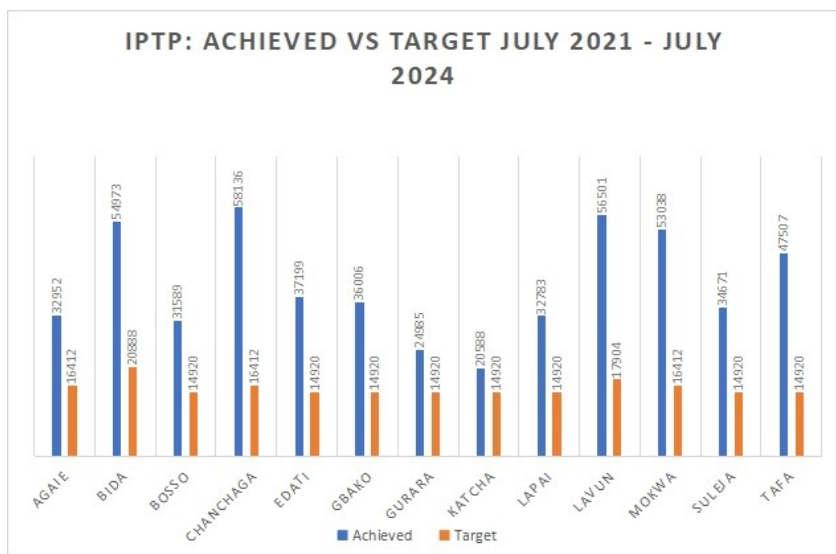


Data Source: ANRiN Backend Database Server, July 2021 – 31st July, 2024

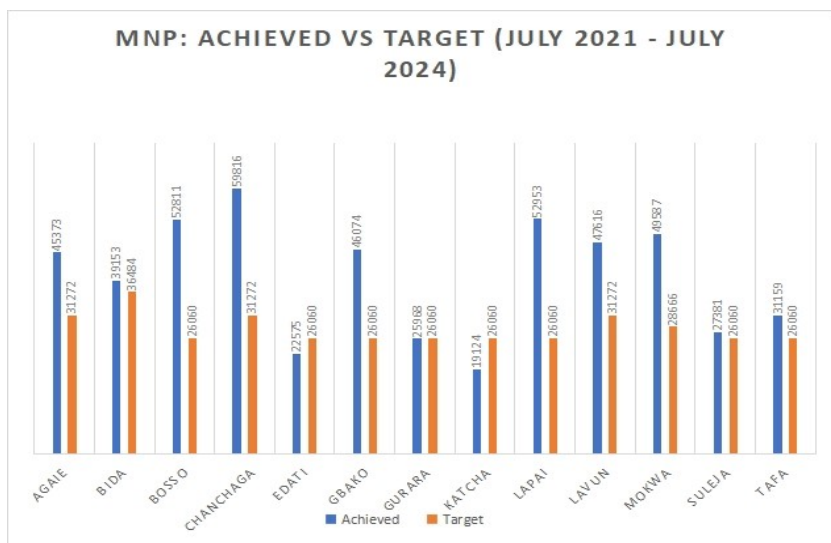
IFA: ACHIEVED VS TARGET JULY 2021 - JULY 2024



Data Source: ANRiN Backend Database Server, July 2021 – 31st July, 2024

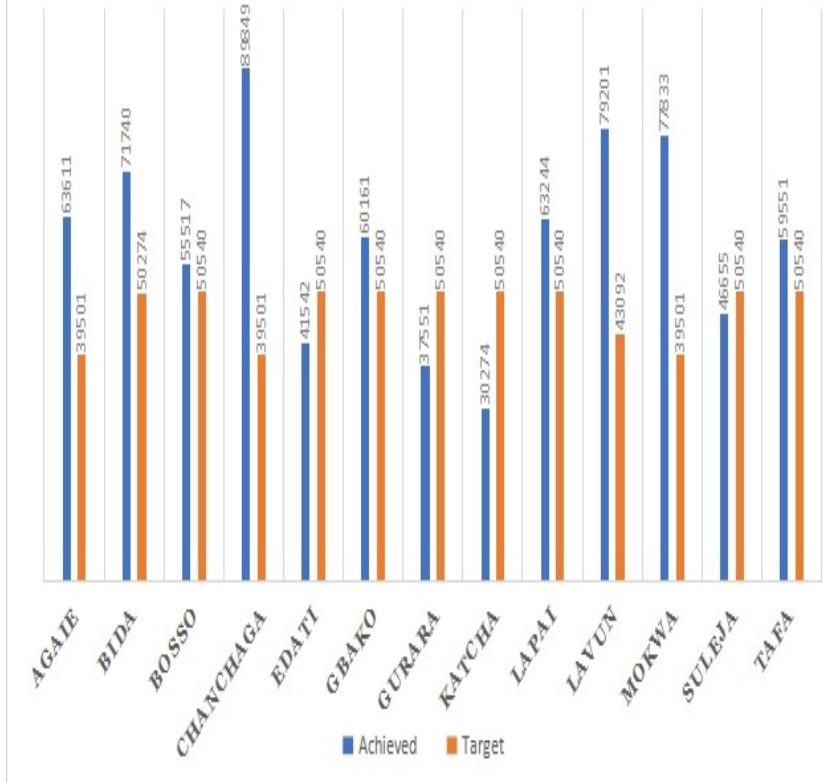


Data Source: ANRiN Backend Database Server, July 2021 – 31st July, 2024



Data Source: ANRiN Backend Database Server, July 2021 – 31st July, 2024

MIYCN: ACHIEVED VS TARGET (JULY 2021 - JULY 2024)



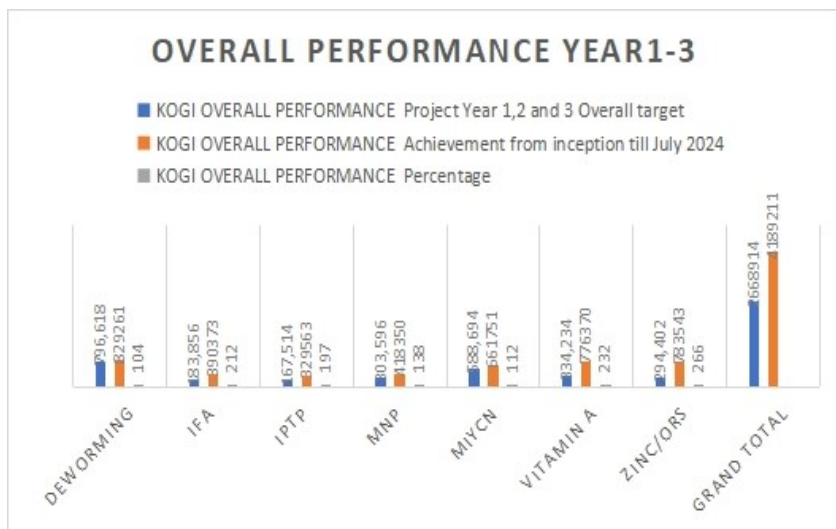
Data Source: ANRiN Backend Database Server, July 2021 – 31st July, 2024

Kogi State.

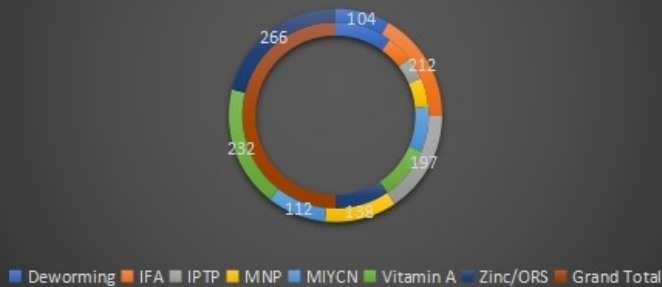
The Project was implemented in 10 LGAs within Kogi State, namely Ankpa, Ajaokuta, Ofu, Omala, Ibaji, Idah, Olamaboro, Dekina, Bassa, and Igalamela.

KOGI OVERALL PERFORMANCE			
Service	Project Year 1,2 and 3 Overall target	Achievement from inception till July 2024	Percentage
Deworming	796,618	829261	104
IFA	183,856	390373	212
IPTP	167,514	329563	197
MNP	303,596	418350	138
MIYCN	588,694	661751	112
Vitamin A	334,234	776370	232
Zinc/ORS	294,402	783543	266
Grand Total	2668914	4189211	

Overall Performance analysis from Year 1-3 indicated the following achievements: 104% for Albendazole, 212% for IFA, 197% for SP, 138% for MNP, 112% for MIYCN, 232% for Vitamin A, and 266% for Zinc/ORS.



Percentage Achievement from inception till July 2024



KATSINA STATE

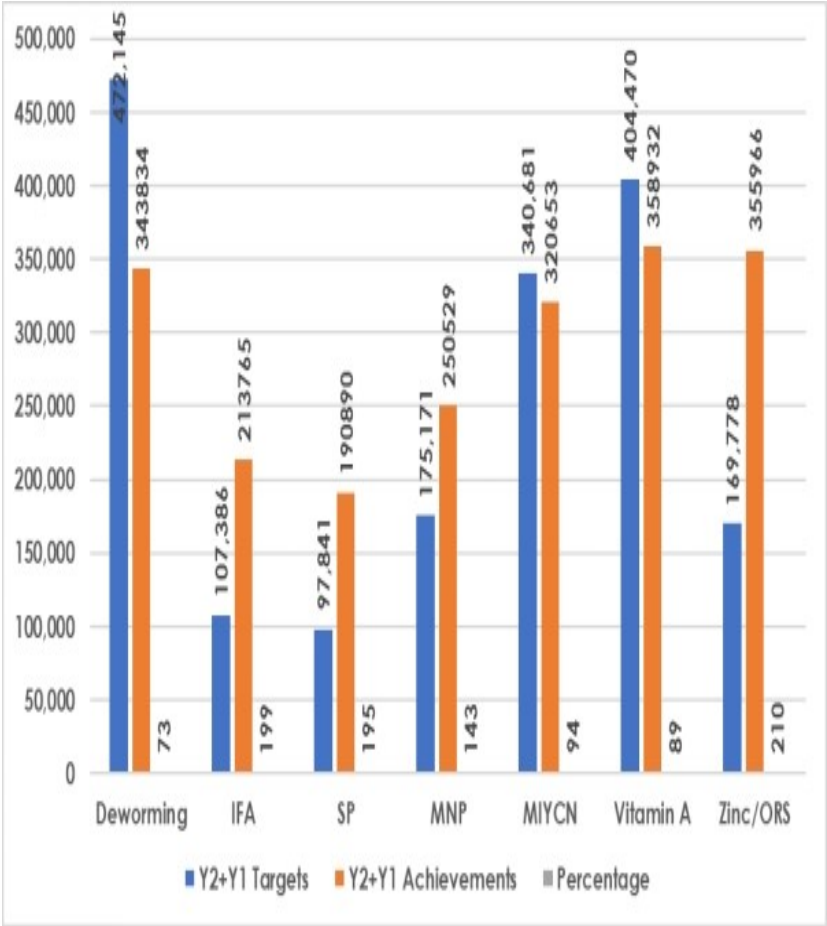
The project was implemented in 16 LGAs of the state namely Batagara-wa, Baure, Bindawa, Daura, Dutsi, Ingawa, Jibia, Kaita, Kankia, Katsina, Kusada, Mani, Mashi, Maiadua, Safana & Zango.

KATSINA OVERALL PERFORMANCE			
Services	Overall Target	Overall Achieved till July 2024	Percentage (%)
Deworming	472,145	391,244	83
IFA	107,386	217,425	202
SP	97,841	193,516	198
MNP	175,171	275,452	157
MIYCN	340,681	322,345	95
Vitamin A	404,470	420,595	104
Zinc-ORS	169,778	417,748	246
Grand Total	1,767,472	2,238,325	

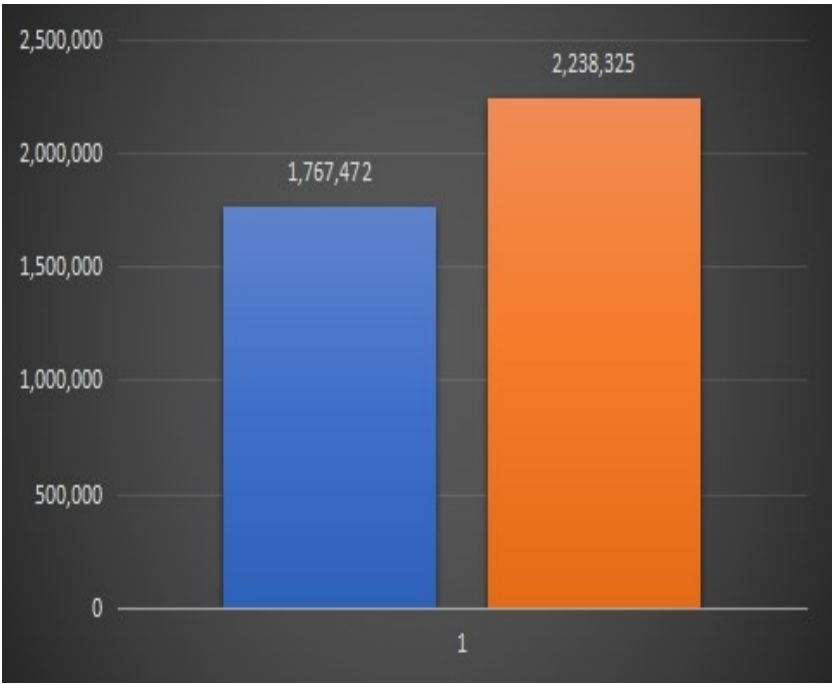
Year 2 analysis revealed the following achievements: Albendazole at

83%, IFA at 202%, SP at 198%, MNP at 157%, MIYCN at 95%, Vitamin A at 104%, and ZINC/ORS at 246%

Overall Achievements for Katsina vs Targets Graph
(April 2023 – July,2024)



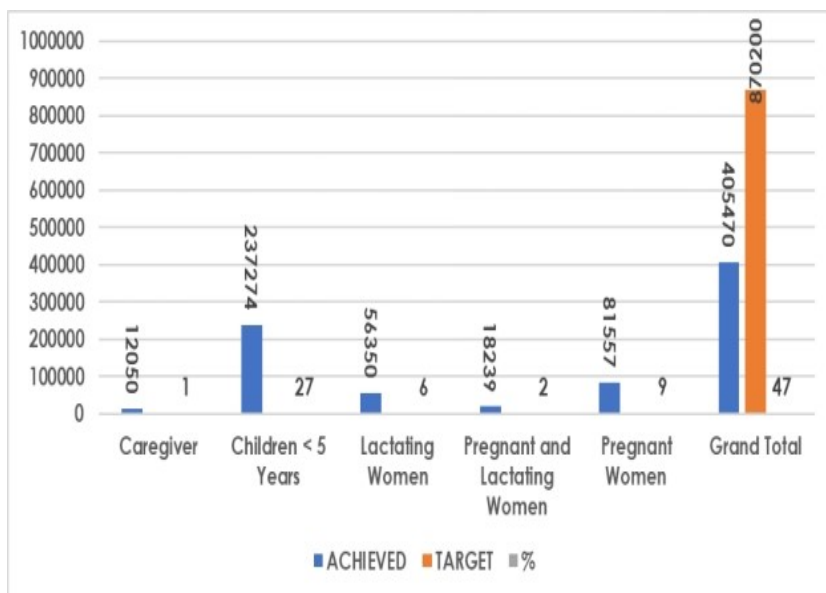
Overall performance for all services rendered



Beneficiaries Enrolled/served for Year 1 (Table)

Beneficiaries	Number Enrolled
Caregiver	12,050
Children < 5 Years	237,274
Lactating Women	56,350
Pregnant and Lactating	18,239
Pregnant women	81,557
Grand Total	405,470

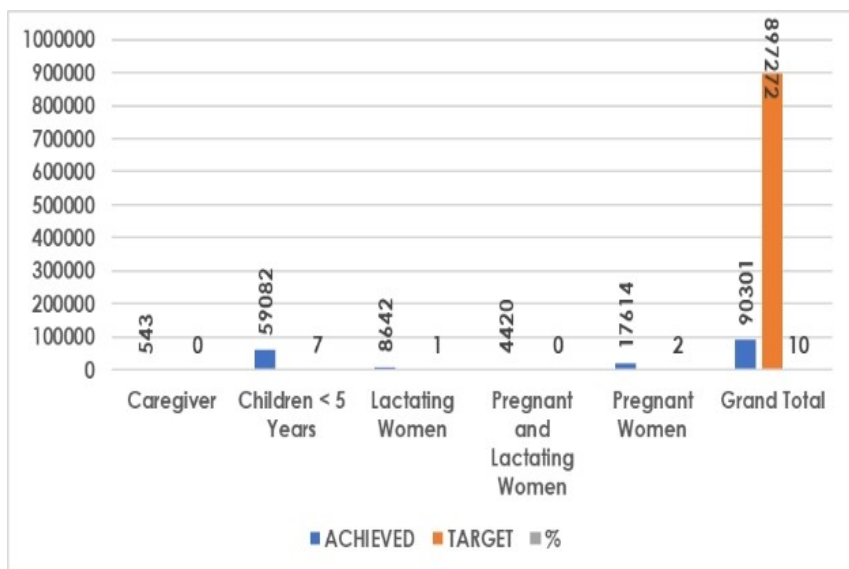
Beneficiaries enrolled/served for Year 1 (Graph)



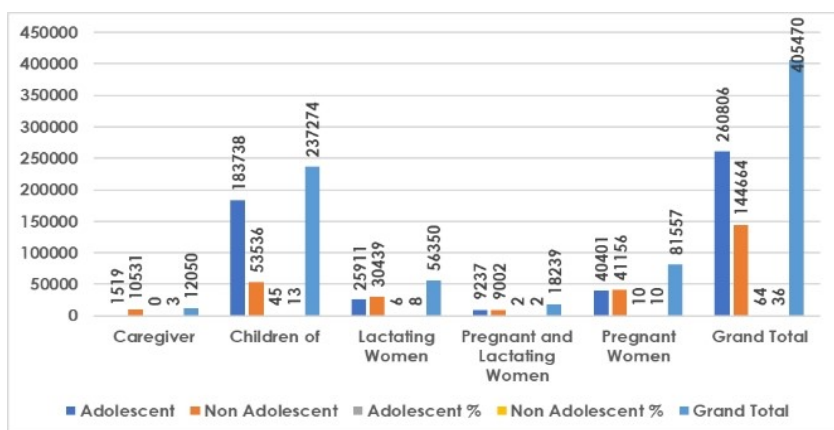
Beneficiaries enrolled/served for Year 2 (Table)

Beneficiaries	Number Enrolled
Caregiver	543
Children < 5 Years	59,032
Lactating Women	8,642
Pregnant and Lactat- ing	4,420
Pregnant women	17,614
Grand Total	90,301

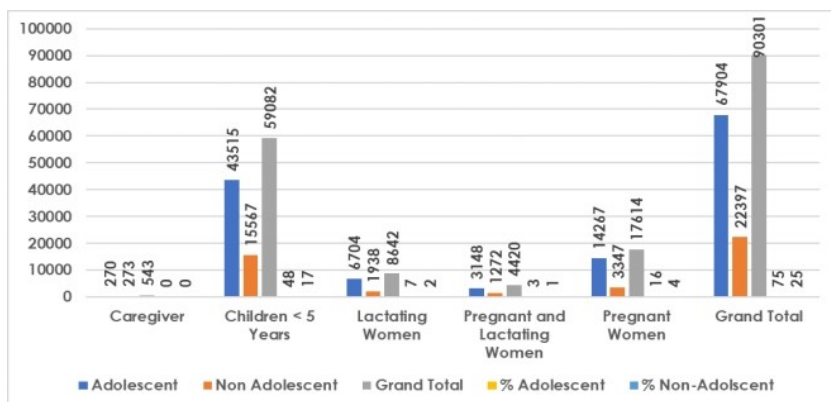
Beneficiaries enrolled/served for Year 2 (Graph)



Total Adolescent Women reached for Year 1



Total Adolescent Women reached for Year 2



The World Food Programme (WFP), Ukrainian Wheat Distribution In Katsina State.

Food and Nutrition insecurity is one of the critical humanitarian challenges the world faces. In Nigeria, it is estimated that 84 million Nigerians, representing about 37 percent of the total population, live below the poverty line. Conflict, insecurity, rising inflation, and the impact of climate change continue to drive hunger in Nigeria. Droughts, floods, and insurgent activities have adversely impacted agricultural output and increased vulnerability, especially in rural areas. According to the March 2024 Cadre Harmonisé analysis, 29% of the population, about 6.3 million people in three northwestern states, are in CH phases 3-4. In Katsina alone, 7% of the population is affected. The assessment of 34 LGAs in the state shows that 11 are in Phase 2 (Stress) and 23 in Phase 3 (Crisis), impacting approximately 2.55 million people.



In response to this crisis, The WFP, in collaboration with AYGF, was committed to addressing these issues through coordinated efforts to deliver food assistance and improve the resilience of affected communities in Katsina state by providing emergency food assistance for targeted beneficiaries through the distribution of 1,963MT of wheat grain received from Ukraine to assist 86,389 vulnerable populations for three months. This report provides an overview of the activities carried out in August across 5 LGAs of implementation.

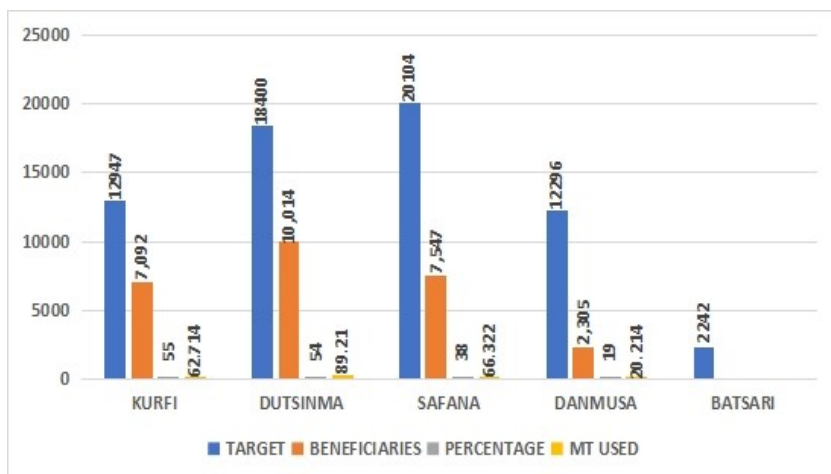
A total number of 26,958 beneficiaries has been served across the LGAs of project implementation. 7,092 beneficiaries in Kurfi, 10,014 in Dutsinma, 7,547 in Safana, 2,305 in Danmusa.



**Flag-off of the ukrainain wheat distribution in
Kastina State**

Total Achievement vs Targets Given per LGA

LGA	TAR-GET	BENEFI-CIARIES	PERCENT-AGE	MT USED
KURFI	12947	7,092	55	62.714
DUTSIN MA	18400	10,014	54	89.21
SAFANA	20104	7,547	38	66.322
DANMU- SA	12296	2,305	19	20.214
SUBTO- TAL	65989	26,958	41	238.460



Migration



Arome Salifu leading AYGF team on a courtesy visit to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) office in Abuja, Nigeria.

Irregular migration has led to human trafficking, labor exploitation, and loss of lives across Africa. AYGF works to protect migrants' rights and offer alternatives to irregular migration.

Key Interventions

AYGF implemented the following projects under this thematic area:

The RESTIPP (Reintegration, Empowerment, and Support for Trafficking in Persons Program), an initiative focused on providing comprehensive support to women and girls who have experienced trafficking. The project was funded by UNODC, in Edo State, Nigeria, and includes three core components: vocational skills training, counseling, and legal services. A total of 50 beneficiaries were trained in Leatherworks, Hairdressing, and Catering, enabling them to acquire practical and income-generating skills. 43 beneficiaries (86%) received comprehensive counseling services, addressing trauma and emotional distress, and 10 beneficiaries (20%) with severe psychological conditions were referred to the Ministry of Health for specialized medical care.

“Extension of Labour Inspection Activity and Law Enforcement to Sectors and Workplaces where Migrant Workers may be Present”. The project was funded by the European Union through the IOM and implemented in tandem with the Federal Ministry of Labor and Employment (FMLE) and the Nigerian Immigration Service in 2019.

Extension of Labour Inspection to Workplaces with Migrant Workers

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has supported Nigeria’s migration management since 2002 through capacity building, technical assistance, and collaboration with relevant stakeholders. Its efforts focus on promoting regular labor migration, effective border management, counter-trafficking, and integrating migration into national development. Currently, IOM is implementing the EU-IOM Joint Initiative to enhance migration governance, reintegration of returnees, community awareness, and data management. Recognizing the vital role of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), IOM encourages their support in implementing the National Policy on Labor Migration. As part of this initiative, AYGf was commissioned to extend labor inspection and law enforcement to sectors employing migrant workers in Nigeria.

ANALYSIS

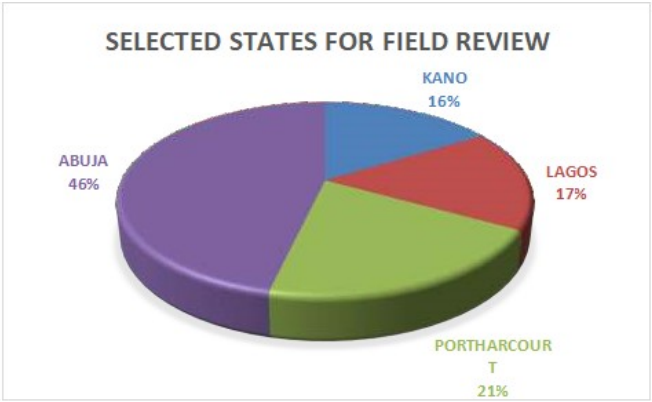


Fig 1: Selected States for Field Review

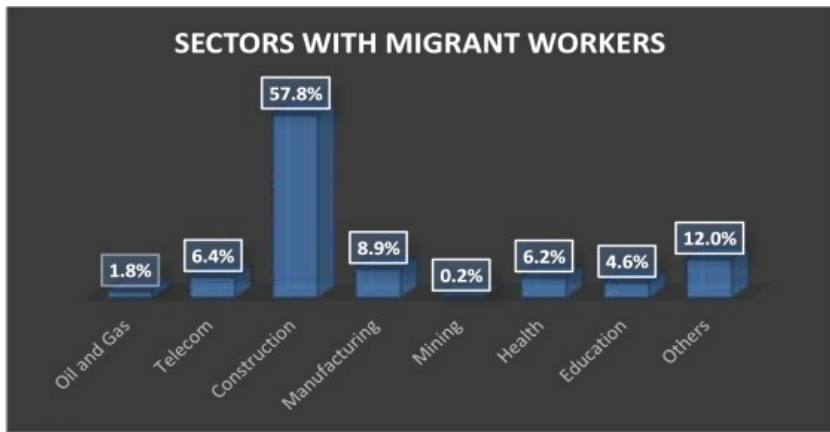


Fig 2: Sectors with migrant workers

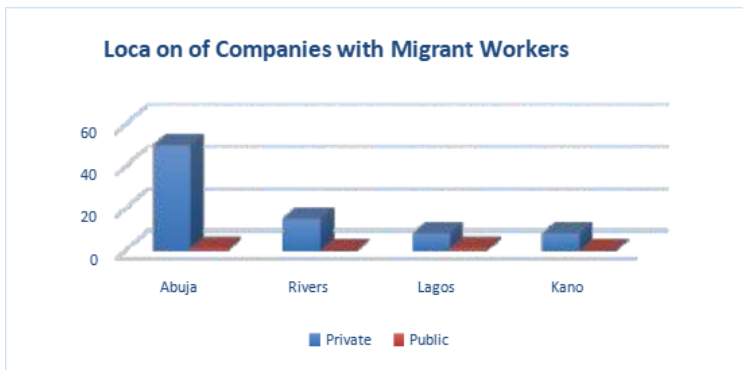


Fig 3: Location of companies with migrant workers

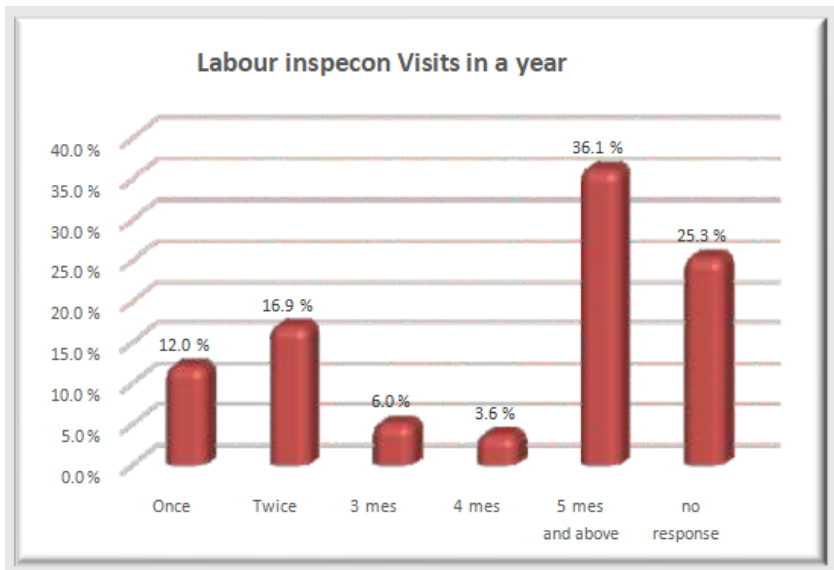


Fig 4: Number of Labor visits in a year

Fig 5: Distribution of Immigrants by Sex

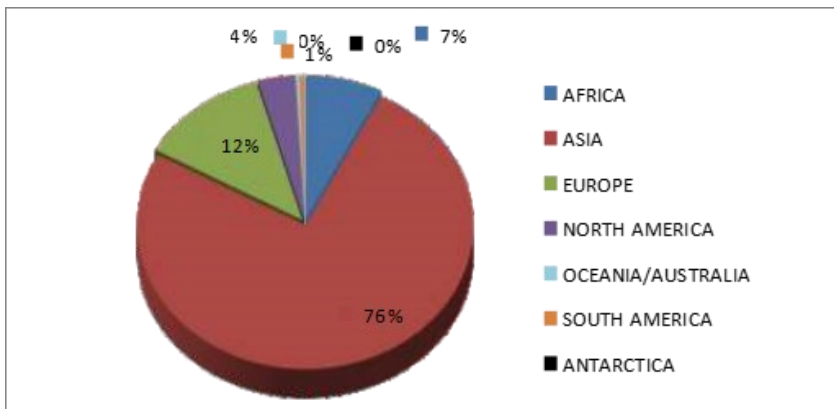


Fig 6: Population of Immigrants by Continent and gender

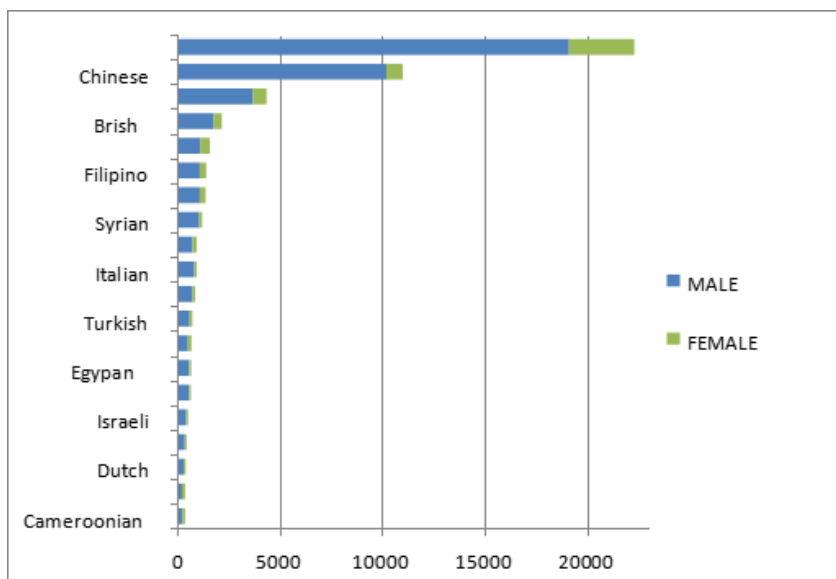


Fig 7: Population of Immigrants by Nationality (top 20)

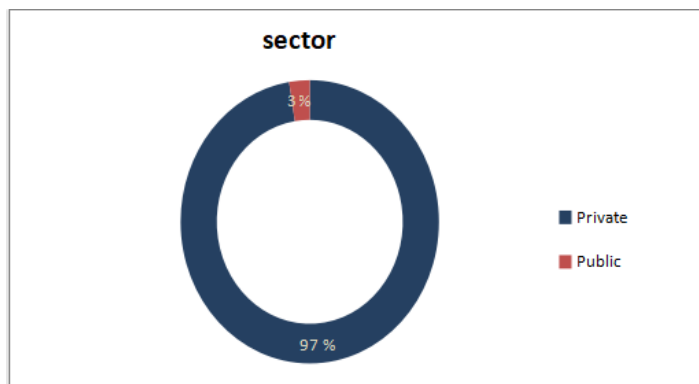


Fig 8: Distribution of migrant workers by workplace ownership

Migration Information & Communication Campaign (MICC) project 1&2 (in FCT, Edo, and River State) in 2020 & 2021, respectively. The project was funded by the German Government.

Capacity Building for Border Operatives for Migrants Protection in Cross River, Lagos, and Katsina States, funded in 2020 by the European Union through the IOM under the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrants' Protection and Re-integration in Nigeria.

EU-NCFRMI Capacity Building Project, training over 1,000 border operatives on migration management. Another notable project is Combating Ignorance of ECOWAS Free Movement Protocols, which educated communities on legal migration pathways.

Livelihood

Unemployment and underemployment are major drivers of poverty and insecurity. AYGF views women and youth empowerment through skills acquisition and entrepreneurship as vital to sustainable development.

Key Interventions

AYGF's livelihood initiatives empower vulnerable populations, particularly women and girls, to achieve economic independence and resilience. We conducted capacity- building training for small enterprises, cooperatives, and local communities through the ECOWAS - funded Sensitization, Education and Empowerment (SEE) project. This initiative equipped 350 direct beneficiaries and 10,250 indirect beneficiaries with agrobusiness, ICT, tailoring, and hairdressing skills, enabling them to establish sustainable businesses and improve their socio-economic

status. Furthermore, AYGf carried out a third-party monitoring exercise of the World Bank-funded Nigeria COVID-19 Action Recovery and Economic Stimulus (NG-CARES) Project, enhancing financial literacy and business management for local small business enterprises in Ekiti, Osun, and Ondo States.

Peace and Conflict Resolution



Members of Nyaya community identifying with AYGf in the Mutual Accountability and Community Scorecard initiative

Peace is not simply the absence of war; it is the presence of justice, equity, and the ability of people and communities to resolve their differences without violence. In Africa, and indeed across many developing regions, conflict continues to manifest in various forms — from violent extremism and resource-based disputes to gender-based violence, political instability, and youth restiveness. These conflicts, left unaddressed, dismantle institutions, destroy livelihoods, and undermine sustainable development.

At the Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF), we recognize that true development cannot take root in an atmosphere of fear, violence, and unresolved grievances. Our commitment to peace and conflict resolution is therefore not just programmatic — it is a moral imperative, grounded in the belief that every individual, regardless of their background, deserves the opportunity to live in dignity and security.

Key Interventions



Officer of the Nigeria Police Force identifying with AYGF in the Mutual Accountability and Community Scorecard Initiative

The Mutual Accountability and Community Scorecard Initiative (MACSI).

The Mutual Accountability and Community Scorecard Initiative (MACSI) was implemented in Nyanya Community, AMAC, Federal Capital Territory (FCT), and Idogbo Community, Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area, Edo State. The initiative aimed to strengthen

police-community relations, enhance mutual accountability, and improve public safety through structured dialogues and collaborative problem-solving.

The initiative involved advocacy visits where key issues such as improper arrests, bribery, and lack of trust were raised. This led to the Phase Analysis, where police and community members discussed challenges affecting their relationship, including poor engagement, limited law enforcement resources, and judicial inefficiencies. The session revealed concerns about trust, integrity, and accountability. Participants emphasized the need for improved case follow-ups, better community-police collaboration, and increased security measures.

Subsequently, intra-dialogue sessions were conducted separately for police and community members to provide a safe space for candid discussions, using a scorecard system to evaluate police-community interactions.

Advocacy Visit

Advocacy visit was a core component of the project, we conducted advocacy visits to both the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) and Edo State, with specific visits to Nyanya Community, AMAC, FCT, on December 27, 2024 and Idogbo community on 2nd January, 2025. The objective was to foster mutual accountability between the police and community members, promote trust, and enhance understanding of their respective roles in ensuring public safety. A total of 14 participants attended, including 9 males, 3 females, and 2 persons with disabilities (PWDs), both male.

During the advocacy, key issues raised included allegations of improper arrests and police demands for bribes, police involvement in enabling drug abuse among youths, and a

general lack of understanding of police roles within the community. In response, discussions were held where community members voiced concerns about police misconduct, while law enforcement representatives emphasized the need for community cooperation and better parental guidance. These engagements provided a platform for both parties to express their grievances and expectations.

Most of the issues raised were addressed through subsequent phases, including Phase Analysis, Joint Dialogue, and Post Analysis. As a follow-up, the next steps involved preparing for the Phase Analysis stage, where both the police and community members collaboratively identified challenges affecting their relationship. This participatory approach ensured that diverse perspectives were considered, forming the basis for targeted solutions and actionable plans to strengthen police-community relations.

Phase Analysis

The Phase Analysis activities in Nyanya community in Abuja and Idogbo community in Edo State, were conducted as part of the Mutual Accountability and Community Scorecard Initiative. The sessions aimed to foster trust, improve police-community relations, and promote accountability in security management.

In Nyanya, 38 participants attended the session, including 34 males, 2 females, and 2 male persons with disabilities. The discussions centered on issues such as poor police-community engagement, inadequate resources for law enforcement, judicial inefficiencies, and the overwhelming population pressure due to the open border between Nyanya and Nasarawa State. Key resolu-

tions included encouraging community patience during police Investigations, reporting unprofessional conduct directly to the Divisional Police Officer (DPO), and following up on reported cases. However, challenges related to judicial inefficiencies and border-related security concerns remained unresolved.

Similarly, in Idogbo, 20 participants (15 males and 5 females) engaged in discussions highlighting distrust towards the police, instances of bribery, and concerns about robbery and cult-related violence. Through Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), community members voiced the need for more approachable policing, increased patrols, and community-police partnership initiatives. The police, on the other hand, emphasized the community's reluctance to cooperate, which hindered effective law enforcement. Recommendations included fostering regular dialogue forums, strengthening community vigilance, and improving police resources. The next steps included organizing intra dialogue, joint dialogues between the police and the community, developing survey questions, and designing scorecards to track progress.

The intra-dialogue

The intra-dialogue sessions were conducted in both Abuja and Edo State to foster open discussions between the police and the community, using a scorecard system to assess key issues affecting their relationship. In Abuja, the dialogue took place on January 10, 2025, at Nyanya Community and Nyanya Police Station, engaging 14 community members (9 males, 3 females, and 2 male Persons with Disabilities) and 6 police officers (all male) respectively. Participants graded police-community relations based on predefined indicators, allowing for candid feedback in a safe space. A key issue

raised was the inadequate engagement of women in the initiative, which remained unresolved by the end of the session.

In Edo State, intra-dialogue sessions were held on January 8 and 9, 2025, at Idogbo Police Station and Idogbo Community Hall. The first session engaged five police officers (4 males, 1 female), who highlighted challenges such as lack of trust, limited cooperation from the community, and perceived disrespect. The second session involved 15 community stakeholders (11 males, 4 females), who also graded the indicators and discussed issues of trust, integrity, and police accountability. While some concerns were acknowledged and addressed, others remained unresolved, requiring joint intervention. The next step was to hold a joint dialogue session where both groups could collaboratively finalize the scorecard, strengthening their commitment to improving police-community relations.

The Joint Dialogue

The Joint Dialogue under the Mutual Accountability and Community Scorecard Initiative was successfully conducted in Nyanya Community, AMAC, FCT, Abuja, on January 13, 2025, and in Idogbo Community, Ikpoba Okha Local Government Area, Edo State, on January 10, 2025. The sessions brought together community members and police representatives to address concerns, and collaboratively develop solutions to improve police-community relations. A total of 56 participants attended the dialogues; 36 in Abuja (28 males, 6 females, and 2 persons with disabilities) and 20 in Edo (16 males and 4 females).

In both states, the dialogues highlighted key issues affecting

police-community interactions. In Nyanya, community members expressed concerns about their inability to report police misconduct, lack of encouragement for community policing, and resistance to allowing the police to take cases to court due to distrust in the judicial system. Similarly, in Idogbo, discussions revolved around distrust between the police and the community, the need for respectful engagements, and improving collaboration on security matters.

Through open discussions, some issues were resolved, the dialogue resulted in the development of a mutually agreed-upon scorecard, outlining areas of improvement for police-community relations, such as fostering trust, ensuring respect during law enforcement interactions, and strengthening community cooperation in security matters. Despite progress, challenges remain. In Abuja, the unwillingness of community members to support police-led court cases remains unresolved. In Edo, the key pending issue was how to implement the agreed solutions to strengthen collaboration between the police and the community.

The next steps for both states include a post-analysis session to assess progress and evaluate the preparedness of both parties in addressing identified challenges. The action plan focuses on monitoring commitments made, ensuring accountability, and developing concrete solutions to pending issues.

The Post-Analysis

The Post-Analysis sessions marked the final phase of the initiative, aimed at strengthening police-community relationships and fostering sustainable policing solutions.

In Nyanya, the session, held on January 14, 2025, brought together 32 participants, including 22 males, 8 females, and 2 persons with disabilities (PWDs). Discussions focused on the role of the National Assembly in community policing, delays in handling reported cases, and the inadequate equipment available to the police. Community members raised concerns about the lack of patience in processing cases and suggested that the police enforce the payment of community policing dues. The police, however, emphasized the need for strong advocacy to sensitize residents on case procedures. One of the key resolutions was the commitment of community members to support volunteer officers and ensure timely payment of dues. Additionally, the police agreed to train trustworthy volunteers in community policing.

In Idogbo, the post-analysis session was held on January 11, 2025, with 20 participants, including 14 males and 6 females. The discussions revolved around reviewing the scorecard established in the Joint Dialogue Session, ensuring that all concerns raised were addressed systematically. The session resulted in key resolutions, including the establishment of a stakeholders' forum led by the Divisional Police Officer (DPO) to facilitate ongoing discussions on community policing. There was also a consensus on the importance of continuous police training and retraining to enhance policing standards. All issues raised were resolved.

The Results of the Dialogue are thus:

Community members gained clarity on their role in the justice process, including the importance of prosecuting cases to ensure offenders faced the law.

The police acknowledged the need to rebuild trust and took

steps to be more transparent in their operations just like the CSP who shared his contact number to the community; a system for reporting misconduct by both community members and the police was established.

Challenges faced and How They Were Overcome

There was an Initial resistance with community members fearing retaliation and the police feeling unjustly accused however, the presence of our team (the neutral facilitator) helped foster trust and keep both sides accountable.

This case highlights how the MACSI initiative created a platform for dialogue and accountability, addressing deep-seated mistrust between the community and law enforcement. By focusing on collaboration and education, the initiative strengthened justice processes and laid the groundwork for a safer, more transparent community.

Chapter Four

Expanding the Mission — AYGF's Growth and Impact

With the foundation of Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF) firmly laid, the next challenge was to scale up. How do you move from a grassroots initiative to a nationally and internationally recognized organization? How do you ensure that the impact is sustainable, not just temporary interventions?

These were the questions that kept me awake at nights. I knew that for AYGF to fulfill its mission, we needed to expand beyond small – scale community projects. We needed to engage policy makers, form global partnerships and influence decisions that could create lasting change.

Breaking National Barriers: AYGF's Footprint in Nigeria. AYGF's first major expansion came when we started working with government institutions and international agencies. Our reputation for delivering real impact, working with integrity and designing practical solutions made us a trusted partner in Nigeria's development space.

One of our earliest national breakthroughs was in migration management and border control where we collaborated with agencies such as the Nigeria Immigration Service, the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). We trained border officials on how to protect migrants' rights, curb human trafficking and improve labour migration policies.

Another milestone was our work in youth empowerment

and economic development. We launched multiple programs that provided vocational skills training, access to funding for young entrepreneurs and employment placement opportunities for thousands of Nigerian youths. These programs directly tackled unemployment, one of the most pressing issues facing the nation.

AYGF's Humanitarian Expansion

As AYGF's work gained momentum, we expanded into humanitarian assistance. Our intervention in crisis – prone areas, especially in Northern Nigeria as a result of the prevalent insurgency and other emergencies brought relief to displaced families and vulnerable communities. We provided food assistance, medical aid and psychosocial support to people affected by these ordeals.

Our humanitarian work became even more recognized when we partnered with the World Food Programme (WFP) on the Ukrainian Wheat Distribution Project in Katsina State (2024). This project provided thousands of families with essential food supplies, reinforcing AYGF's role as a major player in humanitarian relief efforts.

Going International: AYGF Beyond Nigeria

By 2021, AYGF was no longer just a Nigerian organization, it had expanded into other African countries, Europe, and even North America. Our ability to drive change caught the attention of global institutions, donors and policy makers. AYGF established offices in Canada, Zambia and the United States, strengthening our reach and impact. These

international offices allowed us to advocate for African vulnerable population on a global stage, access more funding and implement larger – scale projects.

Some of our most notable international projects include:

- World Food Programme Cash – Based Transfer Project (WFP, 2025).
- Nigeria Police Force Reform Initiative (International Alert, 2024).
- Reintegration & Empowerment of Trafficking Survivors (UNODC-UNVTF, 2024).
- Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria, (ANRiN) Project, (World Bank, 2021–2024)
- Capacity Building of Border Operatives for Migrant Protection (EU-NCFRMI, 2021).
- The Labour Law Inspection for Migrant Workers in Nigeria (EU-IOM, 2019).

These projects addressed critical issues ranging from migration policy reforms to food security, police reform and humanitarian assistance.

Recognition and Awards: A Testament to AYGF's Impact

With the expansion of AYGF's work came national and international recognition. Over the years, I was honored to receive numerous awards on behalf of the organization which reflected the dedication and success of our mission,

these include:

- ◇ Leadership Excellence Award (Dividend National Achievement Awards, 2014).
- ◇ Icon of Human Transformation (National Association of Nigerian Students, 2021).
- ◇ Outstanding Contribution to Positive Change (Rotary Club of Asokoro, 2022).
- ◇ Community & Philanthropy Award (NUJ Kogi State Council, 2023).
- ◇ Great Achievers Award for Human & Community Development (2023).





But beyond the awards, what mattered most was the lives transformed, the youths empowered and the communities uplifted through AYGf's work.

A Legacy in the Making

Reflecting on this journey, I see AYGf as more than just an organization. It is a movement, a catalyst for change and a bridge between dreams and reality for thousands of vulnerable Africans. The work does not stop here. AYGf continues to expand, tackling new challenges, forming new partnerships and creating more opportunities for less privileged across the continent and beyond.

As we look ahead, I remain committed to the vision that started it all, the belief that with the right support, the underprivileged Africans can shape their own futures and drive the transformation of their societies.

AYGf's Global Reach Through Strategic International Partnerships.

Vision Without Borders

From the inception of the Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGf), I had a vision that transcended national borders. It was a vision rooted not just in charity, but in structural, strategic change that could influence the lives of thousands and eventually millions across Africa and beyond. I have always believed that meaningful change must be scalable and scalability demands partnerships.

The journey from a youth focused organization to a full fledged competitive national and regional development and

humanitarian organization with stakeholders across continents did not happen overnight. It took unwavering commitment, a clear mission and the courage to engage with diverse institutions, policies and realities. More than anything, it required trust — the trust of our team, our communities and our international partners.

Foundations of Global Expansion

As AYGF matured, we realized that our local interventions, while impactful, were not insulated from global challenges. Issues like; Public Health, Education, Good Governance, Environment and Climate Change, Nutrition and Food Security, Migration, Livelihood, Peace and Conflict Resolution are deeply interconnected and borderless. This awareness shaped our operating philosophy.

We aligned our mission with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing cross - border learning, data - driven interventions and culturally adaptive program designs. Before we expanded geographically, we expanded ideologically, becoming a hub of thought leadership, innovative programming and credible advocacy. This foundation made us an attractive partner for international actors looking for local capacity with global insight.

Breaking National Barriers

Our first foray into cross - national programming came with the ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol Project in 2014. Backed by ECOWAS itself, this project positioned us as a key regional stakeholder on migration governance. We trained border officials, educated migrants, and influenced

migration policy through empirical evidence.

This project opened doors. It demonstrated that AYGF could bridge the gap between international frameworks and grassroots realities. It also showed that our governance structures, financial transparency and policy influence could hold up under scrutiny from international funders.

The Role of Strategic International Partnerships

Over the years, our work attracted the attention of the United Nations system, the European Union and major international donors like the World Bank, FCDO, USAID and others. Each partnership brought not just funding but technical expertise, global visibility and higher accountability.

Our partnership with the World Bank through the Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria (ANRiN) Project from 2021 to 2024 was a game - changer. We implemented community - based nutrition interventions across multiple states, combining international best practices with local knowledge.

Likewise, our collaborations with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the European Union on labor inspection reform and migrant protection built the capacity of institutions while protecting the rights of vulnerable people. These partnerships were not transactional, they were transformational. Each engagement expanded our understanding, deepened our networks and validated our relevance.

AYGF's Presence Beyond Nigeria

Today, AYGF operates beyond Nigeria, with strategic footprints in the United States, Canada and Zambia. Establishing our presence in these countries was not merely administrative, it was programmatic. We identified needs, consulted with stakeholders and deployed locally appropriate strategies.

In Zambia, for instance, we rolled out nutrition education and youth livelihood programs tailored to the socio - economic realities of Southern Africa. In Canada and the U.S., we focused on diaspora engagement, policy advocacy and research partnerships with universities and think tanks.

These expansions helped us stay ahead of the curve, particularly on issues like irregular migration, climate adaptation and digital empowerment of African youths.

Policy Influence and Global Advocacy

Strategic international partnerships also gave AYGF access to global policy spaces. We have had the privilege of contributing to regional and continental consultations on migration, youth policy and development financing.

We did not just attend global summits; we influenced them. Through our seat on the Technical Working Group on Migration & Development in Nigeria and our continental role under the African Organization for Standardization (ARSO), we championed African voices in global spaces. Our research influenced donor strategies and our grassroots reports became reference points for regional decisions.

Leveraging Technology and Global Networks

The COVID- 19 pandemic accelerated our digital transformation. We built virtual training platforms, developed remote data collection tools and launched a diaspora network to crowd source innovation. Technology became the bridge that kept us operational across geographies. We also became more intentional about network building. We joined global alliances on youth development, food security, gender equity and climate action. These networks exposed our staff to new methodologies, unlocked co - funding opportunities and placed AYG in global directories of trusted implementers.

Global Recognition and Awards

With increased visibility came recognition. Awards from Rotary International, the National Youth Council of Nigeria and international media validated our efforts and encouraged our team. Each award added to our credibility and opened new doors for partnerships.

Our 2023 recognition by the United Nations Volunteers Trust Fund (UNVTF) for work with trafficking survivors was a highlight. It was not just a trophy, it was a testimony to the lives we had changed and a beacon for future collaborators.

Results and Impact of Global Engagement

Between 2021 and 2025 alone, we trained over 12,000 individuals, reached over 1 million community members,

and influenced 8 national policies across Africa. These results were not incidental, they were made possible by global partnerships that brought in both funding and technical expertise.

Our maternal and child nutrition projects in northern Nigeria, backed by Vitamin Angels and the World Bank, saw stunting rates drop by 15% in targeted LGAs. In border communities, our EU-backed projects improved migrant safety and increased legal documentation by over 60%.

Navigating Challenges in Cross-Border Work

Of course, working across borders comes with challenges. Regulatory bottlenecks, cultural misunderstandings, funding delays and political volatility sometimes threatened our work. But we adapted. We invested in local leadership, diversified our funding sources and built robust contingency plans.

One key lesson was the importance of cultural humility. We never imposed solutions. We listened, co-created and adjusted. That is why our programs are sustainable even after donor exit.

Case Studies from Key Countries

- Zambia: Provide technical assistance and financial support for environmental and climate change initiative in Nigeria and Africa for western governments and international organizations.

- Canada: Establish exchange programs that enable environmental experts and activists from Nigeria and Africa to share experiences and learn from counterparts in Canada.
- Nigeria: Our Ukrainian Wheat Distribution project in Katsina (WFP, 2024) reached over 30,000 households, mitigating food insecurity amidst economic downturns.

The Future of Global Engagement

Our ambition is to reach 15 countries by 2030. We are exploring partnerships in East Africa, engaging with Latin American NGOs and building AI-powered innovation hubs. We will also deepen our engagement with African diasporas in Europe, leveraging their skills and resources for continental transformation.

To do this, we are strengthening our internal systems, expanding our monitoring and evaluation capacity and investing in next - generation leaders within AYGF.

More than anything, we want to prove that Africans can lead globally relevant, locally grounded and transparently run institutions. AYGF is not just an NGO; it is a movement. A movement that believes in the potential of the underprivileged Africans, the importance of global solidarity and the urgency of inclusive development. We are building a new development paradigm, one where Africa is not just a recipient, but a driver of global progress.

Our journey so far has been possible because people believed in us. Donors, partners, governments and communities took a chance on a small organization with

big dreams. Today, those dreams are realities in many communities. But we are just getting started. The future will demand more innovation, more courage and more solidarity. We invite development partners, foundations, philanthropists and governments to join us. Together, we can expand the frontiers of what is possible.

The Rise to Global Leadership

Leadership, to me, has always been about impact — reaching beyond personal achievements to influence lives positively. As my journey unfolded, I realized that my work with Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF), was not just about Nigeria or Africa; it was about creating change on a global scale.

The challenges we sought to address via these Thematic areas; Public Health, Good Governance, Education, Environment and Climate Change, Nutrition and Food Security, Migration, Livelihood, Peace and Conflict Resolution were not confined to one region. These were global issues that demanded international collaboration, strategic partnerships and policy influence. With this realization, I set my sights on expanding AYGF beyond Africa, ensuring that our mission aligned with global development priorities.

Expanding the AYGF Footprint

Taking AYGF to an international stage was both a strategic and intentional move. While we had gained credibility in Nigeria, we needed to extend our impact to regions where

our expertise was needed the most:

- ♦ The United States and Canada, to tap into international development opportunities and funding.
- ♦ Europe, where migration issues were increasingly critical.
- ♦ Other African nations facing similar social and economic challenges.

Through tireless networking, partnership – building and proposal writing, we secured collaborations with international development agencies, government bodies and private sector stakeholders. AYGF soon became a recognized voice in policy discussions on social development and other major critical global concerns.

Strategic Partnerships and Policy Influence

As AYGF grew, so did its influence in shaping policies that affected millions. Through strategic collaborations, we contributed to:

- Migration policy reforms in Nigeria and West Africa.
- Job creation initiatives targeting youth and women.
- Capacity – building programs for government institutions.

Our engagement with the World Bank, the German Government, ECOWAS, the United Nations and the African Union positioned AYGF as a key player in policy discussions on sustainable development. This was no small feat, it

required diplomatic tact, technical expertise and unwavering commitment to the cause.

Advocacy for Migration and Development

One of AYGF's most impactful advocacy efforts has been its work on migration policy reform. Through engagements with the Nigerian government, ECOWAS and international agencies, we influenced policies that protect migrants and improve border security. In 2021, AYGF partnered with the European Union and the National Commission for Refugees, Migrants and Internally Displaced Persons (NCFRMI) to conduct a Capacity Building Program for Border Operatives on Migrant Protection. This initiative enhanced the ability of border officials to handle migration – related challenges effectively.

Challenges in Global Leadership and Advocacy

Being a leader on a global stage comes with its challenges, including:

- ◇ Balancing responsibilities across different regions. Navigating political and bureaucratic hurdles.
- ◇ Securing sustainable funding for long – term impact.
- ◇ Facing resistance from policy makers unwilling to embrace change.
- ◇ Addressing public skepticism and ensuring transparency. Yet, despite these hurdles, my commitment to advocacy and policy influence has remained steadfast.

Influencing National and International Policies

My role in policy advocacy has expanded beyond AYGF to national and international platforms. Key engagements include:

- Member, Technical Working Group on Migration & Development in Nigeria.
- Chairman, National Mirror Committee on Financial Standards, Standards Organization of Nigeria (SON).
- Continental Chairman, Good Financial Grant Practice,
- African Organization for Standardization (ARSO).
- Third – Party Monitoring (TPM) of the NG-CARES Project (2023 – 2024), ensuring accountability in World Bank – funded interventions.

These roles have enabled me to shape governance frameworks, legislative reforms and economic policies across multiple regions.

The Future of Leadership and Advocacy

As I look ahead, I see limitless opportunities for AYGF and the young people we serve. Some of my long – term goals include:

- Expanding AYGF's policy engagement across more African nations.
- Developing youth – focused leadership and governance training programs.

- Strengthening collaborations with global policy think tanks.
- Enhancing accountability mechanisms in governance and public service.

I firmly believe that true leadership is about preparing the next generation to take on even greater responsibilities.

Leadership as a Legacy

Leadership is not a destination but a lifelong journey of service and impact. My work in advocacy and policy influence is far from over, but I am grateful for the milestones achieved so far. As I continue on this path, my greatest hope is to inspire others especially, young people to step forward, take responsibility and be the change they wish to see in the world. The future of Africa depends on the leaders we nurture today.

Chapter Five

A Life of Purpose: Philanthropy, Social Change and the Power of Giving Back

The Responsibility to Give Back

Based on my family experiences, I have learned that wealth is not measured by what we accumulate but, by the lives we Impact. My parents, instilled in me the values of sharing, community support and lifting others. These principles became the foundation of my life – long commitment to philanthropy. As I mature, my passion for service only deepened. I saw poverty, injustice and slim chances of opportunities limiting the potential of vulnerable Africans across the continent. I knew that beyond policy advocacy and institutional reforms, direct social intervention was necessary to create lasting change. This conviction shaped my approach to leadership, focusing not only on policy but also on grassroots impact that transforms lives.

Empowering the Future Through Education and Skills

One of the most effective ways to break the cycle of poverty is through education. Unfortunately, many talented less privileged Africans lack access to quality education due to financial constraints. Understanding this, we launched several initiatives under AYGf to bridge the gap and ensure that financial barriers do not prevent the less privileged minds from achieving their dreams:

- AYGf Educational Support Initiative – Providing

educational support to students from underprivileged backgrounds.

- Vocational Training & Skill Acquisition Programs – Equipping young minds with practical skills in agriculture, ICT and entrepreneurship.
- Career Guidance and Mentorship Programs – Connecting students with professionals to help them navigate career paths and opportunities.

So far, these initiatives have helped over 2,000 less privileged Africans complete their education and secure sustainable livelihoods, proving that with the right support, talent and ambition can thrive regardless of background.

Healthcare and Humanitarian Support: Restoring Hope

A healthy population is a productive population. Recognizing the challenges many communities face in accessing quality healthcare, through AYGF, we have embarked on numerous medical outreaches, health interventions and emergency relief efforts. Some key initiatives include:

- ◇ Maternal and Child Health Programs – In partnership with organizations like the World Bank and Vitamin Angels, we have provided nutrition support through the ANRiN project, prenatal supplements and immunizations to women and children across various rural communities in Nigeria.
- ◇ Emergency Humanitarian Aid – Assisting internally displaced persons (IDPs) affected by conflicts, natural disasters and economic hardships.

Through these initiatives, thousands of lives have been improved and communities have regained hope and dignity. Healthcare is not a privilege but a right and AYGf remain committed to ensuring that access to basic medical services is expanded.

Human Development: Creating Financial Independence

Economic empowerment is key to sustainable development. I strongly believe in the idea of equipping women and youths with the resources and skills they need to become financially independent. My philanthropic efforts in this area focus on:

- Women's Empowerment Programs – Training women in business management, financial literacy and cooperative financing.
- Youth Entrepreneurship Funding – Providing small grants to startups and innovative business ideas.
- Agricultural Development Initiatives – Supporting young farmers with access to land, seeds and training.

These interventions have transformed the economic status of thousands of families, promoting financial security and reducing dependency on external aid. Empowering one woman or youth has a ripple effect on entire communities, fostering economic growth and resilience.

Advocacy for Social Justice and Inclusion

Beyond direct interventions, I have remained a strong advo-

cate for equity, justice and inclusivity in governance and policy formulation. Through my involvement with:

- ♦ The Technical Working Group on Migration & Development in Nigeria.
- ♦ Standing Committee on Diaspora Matters in Nigeria (SCDM).
- ♦ Working Group on Labour Migration in Nigeria.
- ♦ National Civil Society Strategic Group for SDGs.

I have pushed for policies that address marginalization, combat violent extremism, promote human rights and ensure access to social services for vulnerable populations. True change is not only about what we do but also about creating structures that ensure justice and opportunity for all. While I have been privileged to lead and support numerous social impact initiatives, I firmly believe that there is still more to be done. My vision for the future includes:

- ♦ Expanding philanthropic efforts across more African countries to reach a broader population.
- ♦ Strengthening institutional partnerships to scale impact – driven projects.
- ♦ Creating a sustainable social impact fund to support long – term development goals.

Philanthropy is not just an act of giving, it is a commitment to creating a better world for future generations. I remain dedicated to this cause, ensuring that every effort contributes to a legacy of empowerment, transformation and social justice.

Giving Beyond Borders

Watching my parents and grandparents extend kindness to those in need from a young age, I understood the power of helping others. Therefore, Philanthropy to me, is not just about wealth; it is about the willingness to share what you have, no matter how small. This belief shaped my commitment to giving back, not just through words, but through action. Through Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF), I found a structured way to channel my philanthropic efforts. Over the years, we have impacted lives through:

- ◇ Education Scholarships: We provided financial support to hundreds of underprivileged students.
- ◇ Healthcare Interventions: Supporting maternal and child health programs.
- ◇ Community Development: Building infrastructure, providing relief materials and empowering local economies.

These initiatives were not about publicity, they were about real change, real impact and real lives transformed.

Creating Sustainable Impact

Philanthropy is not only about giving, it is about empowering. True transformation happens when people are equipped with the tools and resources to break the cycle of poverty. That is why our approach at AYGF is focused on sustainability:

- Job Creation Programs: Equipping young people with skills for employment and entrepreneurship.
- Microfinance Support: Facilitating small businesses growth through financial aid.
- Policy Advocacy: Ensuring government and global organizations support development efforts.

By combining charity with long – term solutions, we are not just addressing immediate needs, we are shaping a better future. Beyond AYG, I have always made it a personal mission to support individuals and families in need. Whether it is paying school fees for children who would have otherwise dropped out of school, helping struggling entrepreneurs find their footing or providing shelter for displaced individuals. I do these not for recognition, but because I understand what it means to struggle.

One thing I have learned over the years is that giving has a ripple effect. When you help one person, they in turn, help others. I have seen underprivileged people who benefited from my mentorship and financial support go on to become successful professionals, returning to uplift others. This is why I believe, philanthropy is a legacy — one that transcends generations. As I look to the future, I remain committed to expanding my philanthropic efforts. There is still so much work to be done and I believe that together, we can:

- Reach more underprivileged communities.
- Create more sustainable empowerment programs.
- Ensure that no one is left behind in the journey toward a better life.

Philanthropy is not just about what you give, it is about the lives you change. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve and will continue to do so for as long as I can.

Overcoming Challenges and Adversity. A Journey of Trials and Triumphs

No journey to success is ever without obstacles. I have faced setbacks, disappointments and moments of uncertainty. However, I have learned that challenges are not meant to break but, to shape us. Throughout my career and personal life, I have encountered barriers — some expected, others unforeseen. These hurdles tested my patience, resilience and faith. But each time, I chose perseverance over surrender.

Coming from a modest background, I knew early on that life would not be handed to me on a silver platter. I had to work twice as hard to carve my path. Education was not always easy. Despite my academic brilliance, financial constraints were a constant challenge. Leadership responsibilities came with sacrifices. From heading student organizations to leading AYGF, I faced opposition and difficult decisions. Starting AYGF was a battle. Finding funding, gaining recognition and earning trust were all uphill tasks. These difficulties, however, fueled my determination. Instead of seeing them as road blocks, I saw them as stepping stones.

- Moments of Doubt and Discouragement.
- There were days when I questioned my journey.
- Would my dreams ever materialize? Would my efforts

truly make a difference? Was I fighting a losing battle?

The weight of responsibilities sometimes felt unbearable. Yet, I reminded myself that growth is painful, but quitting is not an option.

One defining moment was when AYGf faced its first major funding crisis. The organization was on the brink of shutting down. Salaries could not be paid and projects were stalled. It felt like everything I had worked for was collapsing. But instead of giving up, I sought solutions. I reached out to partners, restructured operations and pushed through. That period taught me that resilience is not just about surviving; it is about adapting and thriving.

As a young African leader, I have had to fight against stereotypes. Some people doubted my abilities because of my age, background or the region I came from. I was underestimated in international spaces. I had to work twice as hard to earn credibility. I was often challenged by those who resisted change. But I never allowed these biases to define me. Instead, I focused on proving my worth through excellence.

Today, I am proud that my work speaks for itself. AYGf is recognized globally, and I have had the honour of sitting at decision – making tables once closed to people like me.

Lessons from Adversity

Through every challenge, I have learned powerful lessons:

- Resilience is key.

- Life will knock you down, but getting back up is what matters.
- Challenges build character. The tough moments shape you into a stronger leader.
- Faith and perseverance work. When the road is tough, trust the process and keep pushing.

These lessons continue to guide me in every aspect of my journey.

Overcoming adversity has made me more compassionate, more strategic and more determined. I do not fear challenges anymore, I welcome them as opportunities for growth. As I look to the future, I know more obstacles will come but, I also know that with faith, resilience and a clear vision, no challenge is insurmountable. I hope my story inspires others facing their own struggles to never give up, no matter how tough the road gets.

Chapter Six

A Legacy of Impact and the Road Ahead

A Life Dedicated to Service

As I reflect on my journey, from my childhood to leading a global organization, one truth stands clear: my purpose has always been rooted in service. Every experience, challenge and success has shaped me into the person I am today — a leader committed to the course of serving the downtrodden, vulnerable population and transforming the society. Looking back, I am grateful for the opportunities I had, the mentors who guided me and the people who believed in the vision of Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF). Yet, I know that the journey is far from over. There is still much to be done.

The Impact of AYGF: A Legacy in Motion

Through AYGF, we have made remarkable strides in:

- Empowering over 20,000 youths across Nigeria, Africa and beyond with employment opportunities and skills.
- Securing major international grants to fund education, migration and humanitarian programs.
- Influencing policies that shape the future of vulnerable Africans.

These milestones are not just statistics; they represent real lives changed, real dreams realized and real communities transformed.

Challenges and Lessons Learned

Leadership is never without its challenges. There were moments when funding was scarce, policies were unfavorable and the road seemed uncertain. But through every obstacle, I learned:

- Resilience is key. If you believe in your vision, you must keep pushing forward.
- Collaboration is essential. No leader can succeed alone; partnerships amplify impact.
- Service is the highest calling. True fulfillment comes from making a difference in the lives of others.
- These lessons continue to guide me as I navigate the next phase of my journey.

Expanding the Vision

As AYGF grows, my commitment remains firm:

- To expand our programs to reach more African communities.
- To strengthen partnerships with governments, organizations and communities.
- To ensure that our impact is sustainable and long – lasting.

Beyond AYGF, I hope to mentor the next generation of leaders, helping them build their own legacies of impact.

A Call to Action

My story is a testament that one person, armed with passion, resilience and a commitment to service can change the world. I urge everyone reading this book to:

- ♦ Dare to dream big.
- ♦ Take action, no matter how small.
- ♦ Use your influence to make a difference.
- ♦ Africa's future lies in the hands of these vulnerable Africans. Together, we can build a better tomorrow.

Final Note

For those striving to make a difference, I hope this book inspires you to step forward, take on leadership roles and actively contribute to the society. Change begins with those willing to move beyond ideas and take bold steps toward solutions.

My journey has been marked by vision, passion, determination and a deep commitment to service. From humble beginnings, I have dedicated my life to transformative leadership and learned that perseverance, hard work and a genuine concern for others can create lasting change. More so, I have had the privilege of impacting countless lives, advocating for critical causes and helping to build a better society through Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF).

This book is not just a reflection of my experiences, it is a call to action for individuals, organizations and policy makers to support sustainable development and humanitarian efforts. The challenges before us demand collective responsibility and I firmly believe that meaningful progress happens when our intentions are matched with action.

AYGF receiving award of appreciation from Nile University as a worthy partner.

Dr. Arome Salifu.

Appendix

This appendix provides a snapshot of my vast contributions, highlighting the need for continued support and collaboration to sustain the positive change which I champion. My remarkable journey from a humble beginning thus far, should serve as an inspiration for the vulnerable Africans aspiring to make an impact in socio – economic development.

Educational Background

- ◇ Ph.D. in Public Policy & Administration (in view), Commonwealth University, Belize & London Business School (2016 – Present). Honorary Doctorate in Humanity (2013).
- ◇ Honorary Doctoral degree in Humanity (2013).
- ◇ Master's Degree in Leading Innovation & Change, York St. John University, UK (2012 – 2014).
- ◇ Certificate in MDG Programming & Development, Earth Institute, Columbia University, USA (2011).
- ◇ B.Sc. Economics, Kogi State University, Nigeria (1999 – 2003).

Career Highlights & Leadership Roles

- ◇ Global Executive Director, Africa Youth Growth

Foundation (AYGF), overseeing operations in USA, Canada and Zambia (2023 – Present).

- ◇ Executive Director, AYGF Nigeria, (2003 – Present).
- ◇ Director, Project Implementation & Management (WFP, World Bank, EU, IOM, UNODC).
- ◇ Technical Assistant, SAVE Project, Office of the National Security Adviser, Nigeria (2014 – 2015).
- ◇ Technical Assistant, Office of the Senior Special Assistant to the President on MDGs (2011 – 2013).

Memberships and Professional Affiliations

- ◇ Certificate in Disaster Risk Management, Yale University (2019).
- ◇ Certificate in Financial Management, UK Telecommunication Organization (2020).
- ◇ Chartered Management Consultant, Chartered Institute of Management Consultant (2021).
- ◇ Certified Project Officer, The Centre Project Innovation (2024).
- ◇ Member, Technical Working Group on Migration & Development in Nigeria.
- ◇ Continental Chairman, Good Financial Grant Practice, African Organization for Standardization (ARSO).

Key Recognitions & Awards Received by AYGf and Dr. Arome Salifu

- ◆ Leadership Excellence Award, Dividend National Achievement Awards (2014).
- ◆ Icon of Nigeria Youth, National Youth Council of Nigeria (2018).
- ◆ Icon of Human Transformation, NANS (2021).
- ◆ Outstanding Contribution to Positive Change, Rotary Club of Asokoro (2022).
- ◆ Beacon of Hope & Humanitarian Award, RATTAWU (2023). Icon of Humanity & Community Builder, Exposure Newspaper (2023).
- ◆ Community & Philanthropy Award, NUJ Kogi State Council (2023).
- ◆ Great Achievers Award for Human & Community Development (2023).
- ◆ Recognition by multiple international and regional organizations for philanthropic and leadership excellence.

Notable Partners & Collaborators

- * World Food Programme (WFP). World Bank.
- * The German Government. European Union (EU).
- * Islamic Development Bank.

- Nigeria Police Force Reform Initiative (International Alert, 2024).
- National Malaria Elimination Programme in Edo State, (Islamic Development Bank, 2024).
- World Food Programme Cash – Based Transfer Project (WFP, 2025).

Contact Information for Africa Youth Growth Foundation (AYGF).

Headquarters:

No. 4 Ouagadougou Street, Wuse Zone 2, Abuja, Nigeria. 12 +234 (0)-816-360-3067

Regional & State Offices: Kogi Office:

No. 9 Und Street, Behind Aniebo Quarters, Lokoja. 12 +234 (0)-806-945-0506

Niger Office:

Baba Hannun Dama Road, Opposite Talakawa Pharmacy, Tunga, Minna.

12 +234 (0)-806-999-2063

Katsina Office:

Karimatu House, 7B Fillin Samji Road, Kofa Durbi, Katsina. 12 +234 (0)-703-769-4369

Lagos Office:

- * United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
International Organization for Migration (IOM).
- * ECOWAS.
- * African Union.
- * Nigerian Government Agencies and Institutions.
- * Various international donor agencies and development organizations.

List of Major Projects

- Combatting Ignorance of ECOWAS Free Movement Protocol (ECOWAS, 2014).
- Labour Law Inspection for Migrant Workers (EU-IOM, 2019)– Advocating for migrant workers' rights.
- Vitamin Angels Grant for Maternal & Child Nutrition (2021). Provision of Community – Based Nutrition Services (World Bank, 2021).
- Community – Based Nutrition Services (World Bank, 2021) – Enhancing community health.
- Accelerating Nutrition Results in Nigeria, (ANRIN) Project in Kogi, Niger and Katsina States, (World Bank, 2021–2024) – Supporting maternal and child nutrition.
- Reintegration & Empowerment of Trafficking Survivors (UNODC-UNVTF, 2024).
- Ukrainian Wheat Distribution in Katsina (WFP, 2024).

No. 3 Bale Street, Beside Ikota Primary School, Lekki – Epe Expressway, Lagos.

Borno Office:

No. 22, Behind Indimi's Kofa, Beside Action Against Hunger, Off Damboa Road, Old GRA, Maiduguri.

Edo Office:

No. 2 Akhere Ugbesia Street, Off Abuja Quarters, Benin City.

Sokoto Office:

Arkillia Federal Low – Cost Estate, Izala Mosque Street, Sokoto.

Ogun Office:

Olusegun Obasanjo Presidential Library Premises, Cultural Village, M.K.O Abiola Way, Abeokuta.

Email: info@aygf.org

Website: www.aygf.org



