



THE ADVOCACY BULLETIN

The Nigerian Physicians Advocacy Group



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GRASSROOTS PARTNERSHIP: NPAG AND SHIFT NIGERIA

In early 2020, the NPAG Board made the decision to partner with SHIFT Nigeria. NPAG realized the importance of having a presence at all echelons of politics in Nigeria including at the grassroots level and SHIFT Nigeria's focus is particularly on grassroots advocacy. Grassroots politics uses the people in a given district, region, or community as the basis for a political or economic movement and turns this movement into collective action from the local level to effect sociopolitical change.

SHIFT Nigeria is a non-partisan organization that builds support for transformative leaders in communities across Nigeria; through targeted initiatives, their aim is to educate and raise awareness on the importance of transformative leadership in a democracy at all levels of government especially at the community level. SHIFT Nigeria's team consists of Nigerian volunteers from all over the country who are actively on ground promoting the agenda of sociopolitical awareness to communities in Nigeria.

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As Mr. Tayo Adeyefa of SHIFT Nigeria best puts it, “Through initiative[s] such as the clean water initiative, the goal is to embed [ourselves] within the community. Many of these political leaders go into the local communities and give garri and food to buy votes. It is ‘stomach infrastructure’”. The term “stomach infrastructure” was coined by a politician in the 2015 elections in Nigeria. He promised people rice and chicken over development and won that election. This term can now be found in the Dictionary of African Politics, published by Oxford University Press.

“We are trying to counter that but we can’t do that with just words. As it stands your words don’t matter if they don’t see you helping them right now. It’s not just about short term charity. We are trying to provide a legal and more moral leadership but you can’t do this without using some kind of stomach infrastructure”. That is the reality of Nigeria.



“Charitable works such as the boreholes (our philanthropic version of stomach infrastructure) provided by the Clean Water Initiative merely opens the door to the community; it helps to build our presence and build the community’s trust in us. From there, we will continue to engage with the community and its current local leaders and help cultivate future leaders through our partnership with SHIFT. It is not going to be a fast process but it is definitely a methodical one. We see our partnership with SHIFT as extremely invaluable” says Dr. Susan Edionwe, president-elect of NPAG. For more information on SHIFT Nigeria visit www.shiftnigeria.com

CLEAN WATER INITIATIVE: WHAT IS IT?

by Goodness Esu

Water is life's matter and matrix, mother and medium. There is no life without water-Albert Szent-Gyorgy.

Water is one of the most basic of all needs - we cannot live for more than a few days without it. And yet, most people take water for granted. We waste water needlessly and don't realize that clean water is a very limited resource.

Water borne diseases coupled with inadequate waste management continues to be a major cause of mortality and loss of economic productivity in most rural parts of Nigeria. The Clean water initiative aims to improve access to clean water in rural Nigerian communities. We start with the Aliade community located in Benue State. It has an estimated population of 500,000-800,000 inhabitants. Unemployment rate is 75% with an average income of N600,000 (USD 1,546) per annum.

The project is a collaborative effort designed to implement strategies that will stimulate community development by Aliade community residents as well as empower residents to hold their local leaders accountable. Our solution to the water problem is to build boreholes in various parts of the community, however not as sole sponsors but as a community project that emphasizes project sustainability. This project also aims at community education, creating awareness on the responsibilities of the leaders of the community in order to ensure leadership accountability.

For more information on the clean water initiative please click the link below
<https://www.makechange.ng/portfolio/aliade-community/>

For donations please click the link below
<https://nigerianphysiciansadvocacygroup.z2system.com/np/clients/nigerianphysiciansadvocacygroup/donation.jsp?campaign=3&>

MEET FLORENCE AND ANDREW



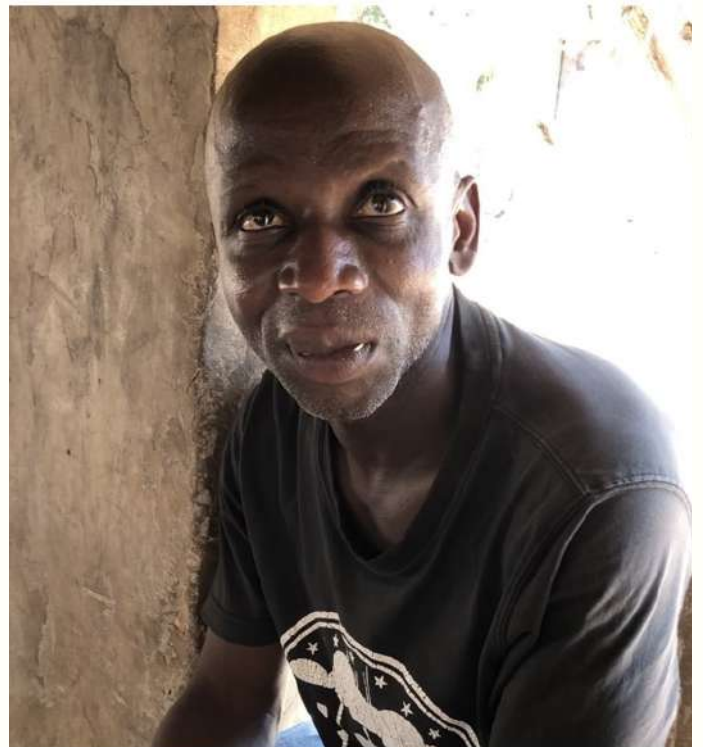
“I trek for hours many times a day to find water.” Meet Florence. Florence says she treks for hours at least three times in a day just to find water for herself and her family. Many times, when she gets to a stream it is all dried up and she has to go to another stream in hopes of finding water there.

She gets her income from selling akamu (pap) to the people in her community; however, her selling only depends on if she was able to find water. So if water was not found that day, Florence makes no money for herself and her children. Let's help change Florence's life!

Your donations will help us impact the Aliade community.

“My four year old child died because of bad water.” Meet Andrew. Andrew is a civil servant in the Aliade community. He says that the lack of clean water in his community has negatively affected the health of him and his family.

They have to trek for hours multiple times a day just to find water, and when they finally do it's dirty and filled with bacteria that causes diseases such as typhoid and malaria. In an attempt to clean the water gotten from the streams, they use home made filters and sometimes boil the water to remove the dirt and kill the bacteria. Unfortunately, it is not effective enough to save them from water borne diseases. It was a waterborne disease that took the life of his child. A disease that could have been avoided if only they were provided with clean water.



CLICK NOW

<https://www.npagroup.org/our-initiatives/clean-water-initiative/>

The LOBBY(IST)

A Well- Rounded Political Strategy

The Nigerian Physicians Advocacy Group was formed to positively shape the current healthcare space in Nigeria by legislation advocacy and community initiatives. In order to do this we realized that we needed a well-rounded political strategy, one that targets the complexities of Nigeria's governance and problematic infrastructure from top down. The true emphasis is on "well-rounded". To actualize our mission and promote the vision of good governance in Nigeria, NPAG cannot be myopic. We aim to employ federal, state and local strategies. Some of these strategies may yield immediate success while others may be delayed in gratification.

Trust that every project NPAG undertakes speaks to our well-rounded political strategy. If NPAG engages in US lobbying, it is to build political relationships to help push foreign diplomacy that may influence Nigeria on a federal level. When we engage in projects such as the Clean water initiative, it is not just aimless charity but rather it is because we also understand the saying that "all politics are local". By embedding ourselves in these local communities through such projects we can build a presence and political influence. The partnerships we choose are ones that fit into our strategy.

Dr. Susan Edionwe, NPAG President-elect



WHO DRANK MY WATER?

The rains came
Water came
Then summer came
Water left

To get water
Few hours trek
For a bucket
Of creamy water

Though dirty
Its water still
Water for life
Or so they say

Though dirty
And likely bad
Its water still
And all mine!

*Dr. Biodun Ogungbo
NPAG Public
Relations Officer*

So, who drank my water?

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the significance of apt leadership and the need for efficient healthcare systems in any economy. Nigerian physicians in the USA continue to demonstrate innovation and leadership in their respective fields yet, the health care situation in our home country continues to decline. The vision of a healthier Nigeria cannot be achieved without good governance.

The health of the nation is not dependent on physicians alone. However, physicians can take the lead in the amalgamation of disciplines that will bring about the health care system we help build in the diaspora. This is the reason for NPAG! Join us to build a healthier Nigeria for Nigerians, by Nigerians!

Iyore James, MD/MALD, FACS