

**HISTORY OF ALEYITA: INDIGENOUS
HERITAGE AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT IN ABUJA**

Preserving Our Past, Building Our Future



Written By

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(District Head of Aleyita)

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Dedication

This book is lovingly and respectfully dedicated to the memory of my late father, Chief Gajatna Ndagye (1921 - 2017). He was a man of wisdom, courage, and stanch devotion to his people. His legacy of honesty, unity, and cultural conservation continues to inspire generations. May his soul find eternal rest, and may his good works continue to live in the hearts of those who cherish his memory.

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A Note to Readers

It takes a village to preserve a village's story. "The story of a people is like a river; it flows from ancient springs to future seas, carrying the wisdom of all who have touched its waters."

This book presents a detailed story of Aleyita, a community whose roots run as deep as the ancient baobab trees that have witnessed our journey through centuries of change. This account of Aleyita, people emerges from the understanding that every community story is both uniquely its own and universally human - speaking to the timeless themes of belonging, adaptation, and hope that resonate across cultures.

In the tradition of African storytelling, where each narrative serves multiple purposes - to entertain, educate, preserve, and inspire – the author offers this historical account not merely as a record, but as a testament to the resilience of the *Gbagyi* people and their ongoing contribution to Nigeria's rich cultural tapestry.

Like the praise singers of old who wove individual achievements into collective memory, or the griots who

preserved the histories of great kingdoms, the author presents this story with deep reverence for those who came before, and profound hope for those who will come after. This work stands in the proud tradition of African communities who understood that *"a people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots."*

Drawing inspiration from the giants of Nigerian literature, - from Chinua Achebe's preservation of Igbo wisdom to Wole Soyinka celebration of Yoruba cosmology, from Flora Nwapa documentation of women's experiences to Buchi Emecheta exploration of social change - the author contributes his voice to the grand chorus of Nigerian communities telling their own stories.

Foreword

Voices of Wisdom: A Meditation on Cultural Legacy

A thoughtful reflection by a distinguished Nigerian traditional leader who understands that preserving indigenous narratives is not merely an academic exercise, but a sacred responsibility to future generations. This master piece situates Aleyita people and culture within the broader context of Nigeria's cultural renaissance and the Federal Capital Territory unique role as a meeting place of diverse traditions.

In an era where cultural heritage and community development are increasingly recognized as intertwined elements of sustainable growth, this book "History of Aleyita: Indigenous Heritage and Community Development in Abuja" offers a timely and profound exploration of the rich history of Aleyita people and their journey towards preserving their unique cultural identity. Located in the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria Aleyita is a testament to the resilience and determination of its people.

This book masterfully chronicles the village transformation from a small farming community to a

thriving hub of cultural, political and economic activity. By delving into Aleyita indigenous heritage, including its distinct language, customs, heritage, traditions, and spirituality, the authors provide a nuanced understanding of the community values and practices.

The author examined community development initiatives, highlighting notable achievements in infrastructure, education, health, security and economic development of Aleyita people. However, he also acknowledged the challenges that lie ahead, such as inadequate infrastructure, informal economy, and limited social services.

What sets this book apart is its commitment to promoting cultural preservation, informing development initiatives, and empowering the community. By sharing this story, the author aims to inspire a deeper appreciation for indigenous heritage and its role in shaping community development.

This book is a valuable resource for researchers, policymakers, development partners, and anyone interested in understanding the people and culture of Aleyita. It emphasizes the importance of community-led initiatives and the need for culturally sensitive

approaches to community development.

Ultimately, this book a powerful tribute to the strength and resilience of Aleyita people. It serves as a reminder that cultural heritage is not merely a relic of the past but a living, breathing entity that continues to shape the present and future.

By celebrating Aleyita's unique cultural identity and community development experiences, this book contributes to a more nuanced understanding of the intricate relationships between cultural heritage, community development, and sustainable growth. As such, it is a must-read for anyone seeking to appreciate the complexities and richness of indigenous cultures and community development initiatives in Aleyita.

Amb. Ayuba Jacob Ngbako (Ngbako Treasures),
Federal Commissioner, Revenue Mobilization
Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC)
Presidency.

Preface

From Heart to Page: A Personal Journey. "Leadership is not just about guiding the present; it's about honoring the past and securing the future."

This book was borne out of a shared desire to preserve the cultural identity and history of Aleyita community and the Gbagyi people who call it home. For generations, our stories, values, and achievements have been passed down through oral tradition, narratives that are rich in wisdom, yet increasingly vulnerable in the face of modernization and urban development.

As the current District Head and custodian of Aleyita traditions, I felt a responsibility to ensure that our history is not lost, rather, recorded for posterity. This book represents a collective memory of migration, governance, family values, communal resilience, and transformation in the ever-expanding landscape of the Aleyita community the Federal Capital Territory.

This publication is not merely a chronicle of the past; it is a call to reflection, pride, and renewed engagement with our heritage. I am profoundly grateful to the editors and reviewer who guided this book from concept to

publication, ensuring it meets both cultural and academic expectations. This book serves as a source of learning, pride, and unity for the people of Aleyita and for all who seek to understand our roots.

Hon. Chief (Dr.) Ibrahim Gajatna Aleyita JP,
District Head of Aleyita (Hakimin)

Acknowledgments

With deep gratitude and profound respect, I wish to acknowledge the invaluable support, encouragement, and contributions of distinguished personalities, institutions, and communities who made the publication of this book possible.

Above all, I return all glory, honour, and adoration to Almighty God, the Giver of life, wisdom, and strength, who made it possible for this work to see the light of day. Without His divine grace and guidance, this book project would not have been possible.

I am sincerely grateful to the Honourable Minister of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Abuja, Hon. Barrister Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, for his visionary leadership and commitment to the promotion of cultural heritage and development within the FCT. My heartfelt appreciation equally goes to the Honourable Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Dr. Zaphaniah Jisalo, whose wisdom and guidance remain a source of inspiration.

Special thanks are extended to the Honourable Chairman of the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), Hon. Christopher Zakka Maikalangu and the

AMAC Legislative Council for their continuous support in fostering unity, peace, and cultural conservation within our communities in Abuja.

I greatly acknowledge Ambassador Ayuba Jacob Ngbako (Ngbako Treasures), a Federal Commissioner at the Revenue Mobilization Allocation and Fiscal Commission (RMAFC) a true statesman, for his encouragement and counsel. My gratitude also goes to these revered traditional leaders, HRH Sa' Peyi of Garki: Usman Nga-Kupi and HRH Chief Luka Ayedo, Etsu Kwali, for their tireless efforts in sustaining our traditions and values.

Special recognition is due to the Aleyita Council of Elders and the Gajatna Family, whose wisdom and unity continue to serve as a pillar for our community.

My profound appreciation also goes to my family member for their solid support.

I wish to specially acknowledge Professor Andrew E. Zamani, a distinguished scholar of Clinical Psychology with nearly four decades of counselling and academic experience, whose immense contributions to psychology in Nigeria, Africa, and beyond as President

of the Pan African Psychology Union and a foremost leader in his field bring honour to this book as he graciously serves as its reviewer at the public launch.

Above all, I owe heartfelt gratitude to my beloved wife, HRM Queen Afiniki Ibrahim, and to my children; Prince Ishaku Ibrahim, Rahama Gaius, Micah Ibrahim, George Ibrahim, and Mary Abel whose love, patience, and inspiration remain my greatest strength.

I am deeply grateful to the editorial team for their invaluable support and painstaking efforts, with special recognition to Dr. Igomu Joseph Augustine and ACC Prince Ishaku Ibrahim for their guidance and encouragement throughout this work.

In the same measure, I acknowledge CSC Kelvin Abuchi Ugwuoke, who proofread this book and ensure coherence of the final text. Together with the editors, their intellectual contributions, patience, and commitment gave this book its final shape, and for this, I remain eternally indebted.

I also extend warm appreciation to Retired Reverend Yakubu Gajere Rtd for his fatherly blessings and

spiritual guidance. My thanks equally go to the ECWA Church in Nigeria most especially, the ECWA Church Hausa Aleyita, and the ECWA Goodnews Aleyita for their ceaseless prayers and support. I celebrate and appreciate the former ECWA President who is presently the Vice President of the

Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Rev. (Dr.) Stephen Baba Panya, I also appreciate Rev. Henry Sabo, Senior Pastor at the ECWA Goodnews Aleyita.

I extend heartfelt appreciation to my in-laws, our tenants, and the many people from all walks of life who dwell in Aleyita Community, whose friendship, support, and shared experiences continue to enrich the fabric of our common heritage and collective progress.

To the entire Aleyita Community, both at home and in the diaspora, I remain indebted for your encouragement, resilience, and solidarity. I also appreciate the numerous friends of Aleyita Community in Abuja and beyond, who, in diverse ways, have shown love, contributed knowledge, and offered invaluable support.

This acknowledgment celebrates elders whose memories stretch back to pre-independence Nigeria, our oral historians who have faithfully preserved crucial narratives, families who shared precious photographs and documents, dedicated editors and research team who transcribed countless hours of interviews, scholarly collaborators who ensured academic rigour, and cultural custodians who guided me through sensitive traditional knowledge.

Like the communal celebrations that mark important achievements in Nigerian societies, I recognize that this book belongs not to me alone, but to the entire community that birthed it. It extends beyond individuals to include institutions from village councils to universities, from government archives to local libraries that supported the publication of this book.

Hon. Chief (Dr.) Ibrahim Gajatna Aleyita JP,
District Head of Aleyita (Hakimin),
August, 2025.

About the Author

The Voices Behind the Story

Hon. Chief (Dr.) Ibrahim Gajatna Aleyita JP is the District Head of Aleyita Community, Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. He is a traditional leader who embodies the evolution of traditional authority in contemporary Nigeria – one who bridges ancient wisdom with modern governance as well as local knowledge with global awareness. In the histories of traditional leadership in Nigeria Federal Capital Territory, few figures embody the seamless transition from colonial administration to modern democratic governance quite like Hon. Chief (Dr.) Ibrahim Gajatna Aleyita JP. As the incumbent District Head of Aleyita Community, His Royal Highness stands as a living bridge between ancestral heritage and contemporary leadership, carrying forward the noble traditions of the Gbagyi people while navigating the complexities of governance in Nigeria's seat of power.

Born into the lineage of the pioneering settlers of Aleyita, Chief Ibrahim journey to leadership is one of destiny and dedication, his father, Gajatna, alongside his brothers Yakubu and Yanda, Chief Ibrahim represents the third generation of traditional leadership in this

historic settlement. His father, the late Chief Gajatna Anyidegye, served as the pioneer Hamlet Head of Aleyita establishing the foundational structures of governance that would later flourish under his son's stewardship.

Chief Ibrahim had a distinguished career in public service that spanned over two decades. A graduate of Teachers Training College, Wushishi, Niger State, he commenced his professional journey with ECWA Rural Development in 1979, where he honed his understanding of community development and rural administration. His return to Abuja in 1981 marked a fundamental moment in his career, as he joined the Federal Capital Development Authority (FCDA) as a Store Officer on June 1st 1981, a position that would provide him with invaluable insights into the mechanics of Nigeria's capital city development.

The confluence of traditional calling and democratic participation found expression in 1989 when Chief Ibrahim ventured into active politics during the Second Republic in Nigeria. As a stalwart of the Social Democratic Party (SDP), he successfully contested for and won the councillorship of the Abuja Municipal Area

Council (AMAC), serving with distinction from 1990 to 1993. This political experience in elected office enriched his understanding of democratic governance while preparing him for the greater responsibilities that awaited. His tenure as a councillor under the Social Democratic Party during the Babangida administration reflects his commitment to public service and community development. After a brief foray into politics, he returned to the Federal Capital Development Authority, where his contributions laid the groundwork for infrastructural advancements in Abuja.

The mantle of traditional leadership passed to Chief Ibrahim through the time-honoured customs of the Gbagyi people. When his aging father could no longer bear the full weight of communal responsibility, the torch of leadership was ceremoniously transferred in accordance with traditional rules, with the blessing of the paramount ruler of Garki, FCT. What began as a Hamlet Head position evolved through systematic upgrades; first to Village Head, and ultimately to the revered office of District Head, a demonstration of both his competence and the growing significance of Aleyita Community.

As a proud son of the Gbagyi nation, a people whose presence spans across Niger, Nasarawa, Kaduna, and portions of Kogi and Plateau states; Chief Ibrahim serves as a custodian of rich cultural traditions and heritage that predate colonial contact. The very name "Aleyita," derived from the Gbagyi phrase meaning "quiet area" or "place to while away time under the shade of locust trees," speaks to the agricultural abundance and peaceful disposition that have characterized this community for generations.

Under his enlightened leadership, Aleyita has transformed from a simple farming settlement into a model community that harmoniously balances tradition with modernity. The community's transition from predominantly traditional religious practices to Christianity, while maintaining cultural identity, exemplifies the delicate balance Chief Ibrahim has struck between spiritual evolution and cultural conservation.

Chief Ibrahim tenure as District Head has been marked by remarkable developmental achievements that extend beyond his immediate community. His successful advocacy for the construction of pedestrian bridges

along the Airport Road; including the vital crossing points at Police Signboard Lugbe, Chika and Kuchingoro demonstrates his commitment to public safety, infrastructural and community development. These infrastructure projects, secured through his professional networks and persuasive advocacy, now serve thousands of people especially commuters daily.

The establishment of educational institutions, including senior secondary schools, junior secondary schools, and primary schools in Aleyita, reflects his steadfast commitment to human capital development. The presence of a primary health centre, Police post and NEPA office further highlights his holistic approach to community development.

Perhaps, most remarkably, Chief Ibrahim's diplomatic intervention during the Goodluck Jonathan's administration prevented the displacement of communities along the Airport Road arguing compellingly that the presence of indigenous communities added authenticity to the capital city of Nigeria rather than detracting from its international image.

The scholarly and leadership excellence of Chief Ibrahim has not gone unnoticed in academic and traditional circles. His recent conferment with an honorary doctorate degree stands as recognition of his contributions to community development and traditional governance. As a Justice of the Peace (JP), he brings additional legal authority to his traditional role, enabling him to serve his community in multiple capacities.

Today, Chief Ibrahim presides over a six-zone community structure comprising Sagiya, Buratudna, Kuta Gbako, Kolo-Dna, Pmanyibo, and Gbayidna, with a total of over 1,294 households. His jurisdiction extends over a population that has successfully integrated settlers from various backgrounds while maintaining the Gbagyi cultural heritage that defines Aleyita identity.

Under his leadership, one village head, Samuel Yakubu, serves as his principal lieutenant, with plans for expansion to accommodate the community steady growth. His governance model, which incorporates a council of elders in all decision-making processes, exemplifies the democratic principles inherent in

traditional Gbagyi leadership structures.

As the author of this definitive book on Aleyita Community, Chief Ibrahim brings the unique perspective of a participant-observer to the narrative of Aleyita. His dual roles as traditional ruler and storyteller ensure that this account carries the authenticity that only comes from one who has lived the history he has documented. His commitment to preserving the oral traditions of his people while engaging with contemporary challenges makes this book an invaluable contribution to literature on traditional governance in modern Nigeria.

In Chief Ibrahim Gajatna Aleyita JP, we find not merely a traditional ruler, but a renaissance leader whose life embodies the successful navigation of traditional values within contemporary realities. His story is, ultimately, the story of Nigeria itself; ancient wisdom finding new expression in modern forms, and creating pathways for future generations to follow.

His Royal Highness continues to serve as District Head of Aleyita Community, where he resides with his family, maintaining the ancestral seat of power established by

his forefathers (descents) while building bridges to a promising future.

With plans to expand Aleyita community and empower more chiefs under his district, Chief Ibrahim's vision is one of growth and unity. His story is not just one of personal achievement but of a community resilience and pride under his stewardship.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Opening the Doors of Memory

Like the traditional welcome extended to honoured guests, this chapter opens this narrative with generous explanation of purpose, technique, and vision. It establishes the sacred nature of undertaking while making clear that this book serves multiple communities, people seeking to understand their heritage, intellectuals studying patterns of African development and heritage, policymakers designing community-sensitive programmes, and global readers interested in how communities navigate change while preserving their cultural identity.

1.1 Purpose of the Book

Why Our Story Must Be Told

"Every community that documents its story claims its rightful place in history."

This section articulates the profound motivations behind this book, positioning it within the grand tradition of Aleyita community that has always understood that memory is the foundation of identity,

and wisdom is the gift of elders to children. He explained herein how this book functions as multiple tools simultaneously: an educational resource that teaches young people where they come from, an advocacy document that demonstrates the sophistication of indigenous knowledge systems (native intellect), and a cultural bridge that connects past wisdom with future possibilities.

Drawing inspiration from the purposeful literature of African writers who used their work to reclaim narrative control like Chinua Achebe challenging colonial stereotypes advocating for indigenous languages, this book is presented as both cultural conservation and political act. In a world where indigenous voices are often marginalized, telling our own story becomes an assertion of dignity, intervention, and worth.

How We Gathered Our Treasures

A detailed exploration of the investigation approach that honours both academic rigour and traditional ways of knowledge. Like the sophisticated methodologies developed by African historians such as Jan Vansina in his groundbreaking work on oral tradition, this book explains how interviews, oral traditions, testimonies,

and community archives were carefully woven together to reconstruct this narrative about *Aleyita* with accuracy and authenticity.

This section therefore celebrates oral tradition as a legitimate and sophisticated form of historical conservation, challenging Western academic assumptions about the reliability of non-written sources. The author describes how our elders' memories, validated through community discussions and cross-referencing, provided insights unavailable in official documents – revealing the human experiences behind historical events, the cultural logic behind social practices, and the emotional truths that statistics cannot capture.

Following the example of pioneering African scholars like Bolanle Awe, who demonstrated how oral history could enrich and correct written records, the author shown how traditional knowledge systems inform and improve modern research methods, creating more complete and nuanced understanding of community experience.

1.2 Overview of *Aleyita* Historical Significance

Our Place in the Great Story

"To know where we are going, we must understand where we have been and where we come from"

This book is an eloquent introduction to *Aleyita's* unique position in Nigerian history and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) remarkable development. The book situated *Aleyita* community in the wider patterns of settlement, migration, and cultural evolution that characterize the North-Central geo-political zone (Middle Belt region), showing how local experiences mirror and illuminate national themes.

This overview explores how *Aleyita* journey as a *Gbagyi* community embodies larger patterns in Nigerian and African history: the creativity of indigenous adaptation, the resilience of cultural identity under external pressure, the complexity of responses to colonial rule, the hopes and challenges of independence, and the opportunities and tensions of contemporary development in Abuja.

Like the opening movements of great symphonies that introduce themes to be developed throughout the book,

this section provides essential context while building anticipation for the detailed exploration to follow. It demonstrates how understanding one's community particular experience illuminate's universal human themes of belonging, adaptation, and hope.

1.3 Structure of the Book

Your Map Through Our Journey

"Every journey has many possible paths; we invite you to walk with us on the one we have chosen."

This is a thoughtful explanation of how we have organized our narrative to serve multiple purposes and audiences. The author explains the historical, cultural, and developmental lenses through which people examine different aspects of community life, drawing inspiration from the multi-perspectival approaches found in complex works of Nigerian and African literature that reveal how the same events can be understood differently from various viewpoints.

This section prepares readers for our layered approach, where chronological history interweaves with thematic analysis, where individual stories illuminate collective experiences, and where traditional knowledge

dialogues productively with contemporary challenges. Like skilled praise singers who structure their performances to build understanding gradually, this book guide reader through its structural logic, ensuring that each chapter builds upon previous understandings while contributing to the overall narrative are.

The author acknowledges that any attempt to capture the full complexity of community life requires making choices about emphasis and organization, and explains the principles that guided the decisions while inviting readers to engage actively with the material, bringing the author's own understandings.

CHAPTER TWO

HISTORICAL ORIGINS AND FOUNDATIONS OF ALEYITA

The Roots of Our Community

This chapter takes readers back to the beginning of our recorded memory, exploring how *Aleyita* emerged from the intersection of human choice, environmental opportunity, and historical circumstance. Like the synopsis of traditional epics that establish the heroic foundations upon which great stories are built, this chapter reveals the wisdom, courage, and practical intelligence of our ancestors who chose this place and made it home.

Aleyita is a historically significant Gbagyi (also Gwari or Gbagi) settlement located in the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC) of the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), Abuja - Nigeria. Its origins are deeply rooted in the indigenous movements of Gbagyi clans, long before the creation of Abuja as the capital of Nigeria in 1976. *Aleyita* is one of the original host communities of the FCT and it has played a central role in shaping the socio-cultural and rural landscape of the federal capital city of Nigeria.

Gbagyi people are peaceful, agriculturalist, artistic and Nupoid-speaking people living in the north-central of Nigeria. They predominantly live in States like Niger, Kaduna and the Federal Capital Territory. They are also found in Nasarawa and Kogi State. Gbagyi is the most populated ethnic group and indigenous in the FCT, where the major occupation is farming and trading. The first settler was a hunter who went to hunt in Paikokun land, a thick forest in Abuja. Paikokun was the name of the mountain where the first settler inhabited. The Gbagyi people initially used to live on mountain tops because they believed they were safer there than at the plains before western civilization made most of them relocate to the plains.

2.1 The Ancient Settlement During the Pre-Colonial Era

Reading the Ancient Background

The land remembers every footprint of those who first called it home."

This is a fascinating exploration of *Aleyita* original setting, reconstructed through careful analysis of archaeological evidence, oral tradition, and geographical understanding. This section of the book

reveals how our ancestors approached settlement not as random wandering, but as sophisticated decision-making based on deep knowledge of environmental factors, seasonal patterns, defensive positions, and trade opportunities.

Pre-colonial origins and migration of the Gbagyi people are considered the original native inhabitants of large portions of north-central Nigeria, including what is now referred to Abuja. Their history predates the colonial period and extends far back into pre-colonial times. According to oral tradition and supported by anthropological studies (cf. Blench, 2006; Ismaila, 2010), the Gbagyi migrated and settled across the north-central highlands of Nigeria, establishing villages and communities in rocky terrains and riverine areas for protection and sustenance.

The land today known as Aleyita is historically part of the broader Gbagyi territory within the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja. As one of the earliest Gbagyi settlements, Aleyita occupies a portion of Gazhima (Galademawa) land covering an expanse of 463,719 square meters. The settlement shares boundaries with Hectorage and Galademawa West to the west, Gazhima

Village to the north, Pyakasa to the east, and Zhidu and Piwoyi in the southern flank.

Before colonial penetration, the inhabitants of Aleyita lived in scattered homesteads, each built close to farmlands and water sources. The early settlers relied heavily on the fertility of the soil, the shade and economic value of locust bean trees, and the abundance of game and natural vegetation which sustained both farming and hunting.

The territorial layout of the community was therefore not random but reflected the cultural attachment of the Gbanyi to land and environment. This ecological bond explains why the earliest inhabitants viewed land not only as a source of livelihood but also as a sacred trust passed down across generations.

2.2 Navigating through the Storms of Change under Colonial Rule

"In every storm, wise communities find ways to bend without breaking."

This is a nuanced analysis of colonial impact that avoids both romanticizing pre-colonial life and demonizing all colonial innovations. This section examines how British

policies of indirect rule, tax systems, and missionary activities reshaped local governance and economic relationships, while also documenting the various creative forms of adaptation, accommodation, and resistance employed by the community.

During the colonial era, British administrators adopted the policy of indirect rule, working through traditional institutions such as the *Hakimi*. Aleyita was part of Garki district traditional leadership under the then Northern Protectorate. The colonial administration acknowledged the authority of Gbagyi village heads/elders and recognized Aleyita as a legitimate village with a functioning indigenous leadership known as hamlet head which was later referred to as Village Head.

Records from the colonial period refer to Aleyita in correspondence and surveys as one of the stable Gbagyi communities contributing to the agricultural and general economic output of the old northern province. The people were known for cultivating crops such as guinea corn, yam, groundnuts, and millet, and for their expertise in pottery, weaving, and wood carving. The advent of colonial administration in the Abuja area

introduced significant transformations in Aleyita. With the institution of indirect rule, traditional leaders were subordinated to colonial district officers, thereby altering the organic Gbagyi leadership structure. The imposition of tax created new burdens for households that had hitherto lived in subsistence independence.

Missionary activities also penetrated the community during the colonial period, laying the foundation for the Christian dominance that defines Aleyita today. Schools and basic health services were introduced gradually, but infrastructural development remained limited. To date, the community boasts of a public primary and junior secondary school, a private nursery/primary school, and a public health centre. A government fencing project was commenced but remains uncompleted, reflecting the partial nature of state presence. Notwithstanding these changes, Aleyita retained its identity as a Gbagyi settlement with strong attachment to land, family, and leadership continuity. The foundations laid by Abusna and his descendants continue to provide the cultural and political backbone of the community in contemporary Abuja.

2.3 The Founding of Aleyita: People, Clans, and Lineage

The Birth Stories of Our Community

"Every great tree grows from the patient tending of many gardeners."

Rich narrative history that reads like the founding myths preserved in oral traditions across Africa, yet grounded in careful historical analysis and genealogical research. This segment of the book traces the migration patterns, settlement negotiations, and family alliances that gave birth to Aleyita as a distinct community, honoring both the individual personalities who shaped his early development and the collective decisions that established our social foundations.

Following the tradition of African praise poetry that celebrates both human agency and divine providence in community formation, the author tell the stories of founding mothers and fathers, their negotiations with earlier inhabitants, their establishment of the social compacts that still influence community relationships, and their wisdom in creating institutions that could adapt to changing circumstances while preserving essential values.

Like the genealogical narratives that anchor identity in many African cultures, this section demonstrates how individual family stories contribute to collective identity, showing how the threads of different lineages wove together to create the fabric of our community life.

The story of Aleyita foundation is inseparable from the migration of **Abusna**, revered as the father and founder of the settlement. **Aleyita Community** is the ancestral home of the Gbagyis, which was founded by my great grandfather Abusna and possessed by his descendants before the advent of the Federal Capital Territory. The name Aleyita” is a Gbagyi word which means “Locust Trees Area” shortened from the Gbagyi phrase “sagyi nu alelta” which means (while away the time under the shade of locust trees). That the original inhabitants of Aleyita are Gbagyi tribe of Peyi (Garki) descendants in the present day Abuja Municipal Area Council of the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja and that Aleyita settlement covers a total land Area of 465719, 686 M2 of 46.572 Hectares and shares boundary with Ghazima (Galadimawa) and Chika Villages in the north, Pyakasa in the East, Zhidu, Piwoyi in the West and to the South is Lugbe, Abuja. The father and the founder of Aleyita by name Abusna was my great grandfather who was one of

the migrants from Peyl (Garki) to Gazhima (Galadimawa) in search of fertile land for farming and while in Gazhima his son Anyidegye (my grandfather) who was a farmer and at the same time a hunter discovered Aleyita (locust trees area) during one of his hunting expeditions.

The area had many locust trees and aside from the usefulness of the locust beans, the trees provided cool shelter for relaxation and most of the time Anyidegye goes there to rest and while away time at his non-engagement hours. Anyidegye became attached to the environment and decided to relocate from Gazhima along with his families to the area in 1921 when BCG Vaccination was first introduced in Nigeria in order to dodge the inoculations and this new found settlement was referred to as Aleyita (locust trees area) which remain the name of the settlement till date. The family of Anyidegye grew by natural procreation; and they were later joined by some Gbagyi people from other communities such as his brother Yakubu Anyidegye from Gazhima, Bulus Tukura from Zhidu, Chasnayinka from Pyakasa and Gnimavnu from Dnako amongst others.

Anyidegye the first settler automatically became the head of the community until his death in 1952 (the year I was born) consequent upon which his eldest son Gajatna Ndagye (my father) took over as the community head.

My father Gajatna Ndagye became incapacitated due to old age and this necessitate me to take over the leadership of the community as the Village Head (Dagaci) in the year 2003 while my father was still alive. My father Gajatna Ndagye later died on the 14th August, 2017 and the office of the village head (Dagaci) was eventually upgraded to the present status of a District Head (Hakimi) in the same year 2017.

Aleyita is segmented into six (6) Community Wards which include:

1. Sagyiya
2. Burutudna
3. Kuta Gbako
4. Kolo - Dna
5. Pmanyibo
6. Gbayidna

Sagyiya has a total number of 152 households, Burutudna 141 households, Kuta Gbako 250 households, Kolo - Dna 294 households, Pmanyibo 244

households and Gbayidna 210 households making up the total number of households to be 1,291.

The original inhabitants of Aleyita were earlier traditional worshippers, however, 99% of them are now converted to Christianity with the rest still practicing the traditional religion, while among later settlers are Muslims. The majority of the population are farmers with few civil/public servants, construction workers and petty traders. The community currently has some government presence and to this end it has a public primary and junior secondary schools, private owned nursery/primary schools and a public health centre.

2.4 Integration into the Federal Capital Territory (FCT)

The turning point in Aleyita history came with the creation of the Federal Capital Territory in 1976, through Decree No. 6 of the same year. The land designated for the FCT was carved out of Niger, Nasarawa, and Kogi States, with the seat of government relocated from Lagos to Abuja. Aleyita, being within the boundaries of this newly created territory, was formally integrated into Abuja Municipal Area Council. Although the FCT development brought opportunities,

it also introduced challenges; especially relating to land acquisition, compensation, and urban displacement.

Despite these disruptions, the traditional institutions in Aleyita; particularly the office of the district head (*Hakimi*) have remained resilient, continuing to serve as custodians of the land, culture, and social harmony. The Gbagyi people of Aleyita negotiated their place in the evolving urban setting, adapting to modern governance while preserving their heritage.

2.5 Current Status and Community Identity

Today, Aleyita is a vibrant and semi-urban community with a diverse population that includes indigenous Gbagyi people and settlers, migrants from other parts of Nigeria and beyond. The community maintains its traditional identity through regular festivals, language use, and the functioning of its indigenous leadership structure.

The community is strategically located near key development corridors of the FCT, including the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Lugbe, the Voice of Nigeria (VON) transmission station and proposed Technology Village. This proximity has

accelerated real estate development, population growth, and socio-economic transformation, making Aleyita a focal point of urban integration in Abuja.

However, despite these developments, the community continues to face issues such as land insecurity, infrastructural gaps, and cultural dilution due to urbanization. The leadership under my watch as district head of Aleyita, has been instrumental in articulating the needs of our people and preserving the community rights and dignity in the face of change.

Aleyita's story is emblematic of many indigenous communities in Nigeria grappling with modern development while striving to maintain cultural essence. From a humble agrarian origin to a key indigenous settlement in the Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory, Aleyita remains a symbol of Gbagyi resilience, identity, and adaptation. Its history passed down through generations; continue to live in its people, its traditions, and the enduring voice of its elders.

2.6 Socio-Economic Life and Leadership

The Foundations of Prosperity and Order

"True prosperity flows from wisdom shared and work

done together."

An engaging exploration of how our ancestors organized their economic and social lives, revealing the sophistication of indigenous systems often overlooked by colonial and post-colonial accounts focused on European-style institutions. This part of the book details the farming techniques adapted to local soil and climate, the hunting strategies that maintained ecological balance, and the trading relationships that connected Aleyita to regional and trans-regional networks of exchange.

The author explores how our ancestors balanced individual initiative with collective responsibility, how they managed common resources sustainably, and how they created systems of mutual support that could function effectively across different scales from immediate family to extended clan to whole community. The people of Aleyita lived primarily as farmers, cultivating staple crops such as millet, yam, guinea corn, and groundnuts. Farming was complemented by hunting, which supplied protein and skins for local use. Over time, the locust bean trade also became a modest but valuable economic activity.

Community leadership was originally centered on the authority of the head settler, who combined spiritual, political, and social responsibilities. Leadership was both hereditary and communal, as elders advised the head on matters of conflict resolution, land allocation, and rituals.

CHAPTER THREE

INDIGENOUS HERITAGE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

The Soul of Our Community

This chapter celebrates the rich cultural traditions that have sustained our community through centuries of change, exploring how language, ceremony, governance, and spirituality function as interconnected systems that create meaning, maintain relationships, and transmit wisdom across generations. Like the intricate patterns of traditional textiles where each thread contributes to the overall design, these cultural elements work together to create the distinctive identity that makes Aleyita unique in itself.

3.1 Language, Oral Traditions, and Storytelling

The Voice of Our Ancestors

"A language is not just words; it is a way of seeing the world."

A loving exploration of the Gbagyi language as a repository of cultural wisdom, philosophical insight, and artistic expression. This section reveals how our language encodes unique ways of understanding relationships, time, spirituality, and responsibility that

resist simple translation into other languages. The author showcases the sophisticated oral literature - folktales that teach moral lessons, praise poems that celebrate achievement, proverbs that distill practical wisdom, and historical narratives that preserve collective memory.

This book explores how our storytelling traditions function as educational systems, entertainment venues, and mechanisms for social cohesion, showing how the same stories can operate simultaneously on multiple levels - teaching children about proper behavior, providing adults with frameworks for decision-making, and maintaining community solidarity through shared reference points and values.

The Aleyita community, like other Gbagyi settlements across Nigeria, treasures the Gbagyi language (Gbagyi yi) as its foremost cultural identity. Language serves not merely as a medium of communication but as the custodian of oral history, proverbs, and ancestral wisdom. Among elders, storytelling remains a communal art: folktales, moonlight stories, and riddles are shared with children to instruct them in morality, courage, and communal solidarity. The name Aleyita

itself is derived from the abundant locust bean trees (iru/parkia biglobosa) which once flourished across the landscape, symbolizing both fertility and resilience.

3.2 Customs, Rites, and Ceremonies

The Sacred Rhythms of Life

"In ceremony, the sacred and the everyday dance together."

Detailed and respectful documentation of the traditional ceremonies that mark important transitions in individual and community life. This section describes birth rituals that welcome new members into the community with blessing and protection, marriage processes that create new family alliances while honoring existing relationships, initiation rites that mark the passage to adult responsibility and privilege, and funeral observances that honor the deceased while providing comfort and continuity for the living.

This section reveals how our ceremonial life adapts to changing circumstances while maintaining essential functions, showing how traditional forms can incorporate new elements while preserving their core spiritual and social purposes. We examine how

contemporary celebrations maintain connections to ancestral wisdom while addressing current community needs.

Customary life in Aleyita mirrors the Gbagyi worldview of balance between earth and spirit. Birth rites are marked with blessings from elders, while marriages are celebrated through family negotiations, exchange of gifts, and feasting. Although Christianity is now the dominant faith, traditional ceremonies particularly harvest festivities and initiation rites remain woven into communal memory. Death is not seen as an end, but as a passage into the ancestral fold, and burials are conducted with dignity, often accompanied by drumming and songs of remembrance.

3.3 Traditional Governance and the Role of the District Head (*Hakimi*)

Wisdom in Leadership and Service

"True leadership grows from service, not from power."

An insightful examination of how the *Hakimi* institution evolved as a sophisticated system of governance that balances authority with accountability, tradition with adaptation, and individual leadership with collective decision-making. The author explores the complex

mechanisms for dispute resolution, land management, and social regulation that emerged from centuries of collective experience in community self-governance.

In Aleyita village of the FCT, Hon. Chief (Dr.) Ibrahim Gajatna JP is known as the *Hakimin Aleyita*, meaning he is the District Head who presides over cultural, communal, and administrative affairs in the community. Historically, Gbagyi communities operated on a decentralized system of leadership where elders and family heads held sway. Over time, with the influence of the colonial native authority system, the institution of the Hakimi (District Head) emerged as the central figure of authority. In Aleyita, the district head traces lineage from the founding patriarchs such as Abusna and Gajatna. The Hakimi presides over disputes, oversees land use, liaises with government, and preserves the dignity of tradition. While colonialism eroded some powers to collect tax once associated with the Hakimi, the position remains an enduring pillar of cultural legitimacy.

3.4 Spirituality, Ancestor Worship, and Sacred Sites

Where Earth Meets Heaven

"The ancestors live in the wisdom we carry and the love we share."

A sensitive and respectful exploration of traditional spiritual beliefs and practices, treating indigenous religion with the same scholarly attention and cultural dignity typically accorded to world religions. This book documents shrines, sacred groves, and religious rituals as expressions of sophisticated theological thinking about the relationship between the visible and invisible worlds, the connections between individual and community well-being, and the responsibilities of the living toward both ancestors and descendants. Spirituality in Aleyita, as among the wider Gbagyi people, has always been more than ritual; it is a worldview that understands life as an ongoing dialogue between the seen and the unseen, where harmony between the two guarantees peace, fertility, health, and communal prosperity.

Before the spread of Christianity, Aleyita spiritual life revolved around ancestral reverence and sacred groves. Locust bean trees and streams were imbued with spiritual significance, serving as places of rest,

reflection, and sometimes sacrifice. The grove was not only a site of worship but also a sanctuary for reflection, justice, and reconciliation. Ancestors were invoked not as distant spirits but as active guardians of family and land, mediating between the Creator and the living.

Today, most inhabitants are Christians, yet the respect for ancestors persists in subtle ways through remembrance, oral recitations of genealogy, and blessings invoked at family gatherings. Even in Christian prayers, one finds echoes of indigenous spirituality, as elders ask God to bless the family “as our fathers once blessed us.” The sacred is not abandoned; rather, it has been reinterpreted within a Christian frame, blending continuity and transformation. This dynamic coexistence of belief systems illustrates cultural resilience: while the surface of worship may change, the deep currents of respect for heritage, kinship, and sacred order continue to flow.

Traditional symbols; such as the locust bean tree, the earthen shrine, or the communal pouring of libation are still remembered with reverence, even if rarely practiced in public. In private conversations and community rituals, especially during funerals and

harvest periods, one can still glimpse the lingering threads of indigenous spirituality woven into Christian expressions. This respectful blending avoids cultural rupture, ensuring that the people of Aleyita honour their forebears while embracing new religious pathways.

The story of Aleyita's spirituality is thus one of transformation rather than erasure. It demonstrates that indigenous beliefs were never “primitive” but rather sophisticated systems of theology that continue to inform ethics, family cohesion, and the community's sense of belonging. By treating this heritage with dignity, Aleyita offers a lesson to the wider world: true faith is not about forgetting one's roots but about finding ways to let the old and the new walk together in dignity.

CHAPTER FOUR

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITY LIFE

The Living Fabric of Our Society

This chapter explores the intricate social relationships and institutions that create the foundation of community life, showing how marriage, family, age-grade systems, gender roles, and cultural celebrations work together to maintain social cohesion in Aleyita while allowing for individual expression and community adaptation. Like the complex weaving patterns that create beautiful and durable textiles, these social institutions interlock to create a society that is both stable and flexible.

4.1 Marriage, Family, and Kinship Systems

The Foundation of Community

“Strong families are the foundation upon which strong communities are built”.

A comprehensive exploration of family structures that reveals the sophistication of indigenous social organization and its continued relevance in contemporary life. This book examines how extended family systems create networks of mutual support,

collective responsibility, and intergenerational knowledge transfer, showing how kinship relationships extend far beyond the nuclear family to encompass complex webs of obligation and care.

The book further explores how marriage practices create alliances between families and clans, how child-rearing responsibilities are shared across extended networks, how elders are honoured and cared for, and how conflicts are resolved through family mediation. It shows how these relationships continue to provide stability and support even as community members increasingly participate in modern economic and educational systems.

Marriage in Aleyita is traditionally a union not merely of two individuals (husband and wife) but of families and lineages. The bride wealth (cultural tokens, foodstuffs, or livestock) emphasizes the seriousness of commitment, symbolizing a covenant that binds two extended families together in trust and mutual obligation. Beyond the symbolic exchange, the process of marriage negotiations itself often strengthens inter-clan relationships, creating a network of alliances that serve social, political, and economic purposes.

Polygamy was once widespread, reflecting the agricultural economy where larger families provided greater labour resources and social status. However, the spread of Christianity and modern education has encouraged monogamous unions, reshaping expectations around marriage while not entirely erasing polygamous traditions, which still persist in some families.

Families are extended, with grandparents, uncles, and aunts actively shaping the upbringing of children in various Aleyita clans. Child-rearing is not seen as the sole responsibility of parents but as a communal duty, where kin provide guidance, discipline, and mentorship. Elders, in particular, serve as custodians of wisdom, passing down proverbs, folktales, and moral lessons that reinforce cultural values. Honour and respect for elders remain core principles, as they are not only cared for in old age but are also central to dispute resolution and decision-making.

Kinship ties further ensure that no individual stands alone. In times of crisis; be it illness, bereavement, or economic hardship; extended families rally around their members, offering financial, emotional, and spiritual

support. Even as modern economic systems and urban lifestyles reshape family life, these traditional networks of kinship continue to act as safety nets, preventing social isolation and providing continuity with ancestral practices.

In all, the marriage, family, and kinship systems of Aleyita exemplify an inherent philosophy of interconnectedness one that regards every child as belonging to the community, every elder as a living archive of wisdom, and every marriage as an alliance that reinforces the fabric of society. Far from being outdated, these indigenous structures offer lessons in resilience, solidarity, and collective responsibility in a rapidly globalizing world.

4.2 Youth, Age-Grades, and Elders Councils

The School of Life and Leadership

"Every elder was once a student; every student can become a teacher."

This is an engaging examination of how age-grade systems function as comprehensive educational institutions that prepare individuals for increasing levels of responsibility and authority while maintaining community continuity and social order. This book

explores the sophisticated pedagogical principles embedded in traditional education systems that combine practical skill development with moral instruction and civic education.

This book also reveals how traditional education emphasizes learning through participation, mentorship through experience, and leadership through service, creating leaders who understand their roles as stewards of community welfare rather than pursuers of individual advantage. The process of growing through age-grade levels was never accidental; it was a carefully nurtured journey that ensured that every child, adolescent, and young adult was gradually introduced to roles of discipline, endurance, sacrifice, and responsibility.

Youth associations, though less formalized than in some ethnic groups, form the backbone of communal labour assisting with farming, festivals, and security. In this sense, the youth serve not only as the physical strength of the community but also as its cultural heartbeat, ensuring continuity of songs, dances, and rites of passage. Age-grades organize work parties and provide a sense of belonging, where collective labour is not seen as a burden but as a joyful expression of unity.

Participation in age-grade duties ensures that no household is left behind during farming seasons or in moments of communal need.

Beyond labour, age-grades also play a crucial role in discipline and social regulation. Younger members are trained to respect authority, while the older age-grades are expected to mentor and serve as role models. This layered approach to socialization helps cultivate humility in leadership, where authority is never wielded selfishly but exercised with a sense of custodianship for the common good.

Above them, the Council of Elders functions as an advisory body to the District Head, ensuring continuity of wisdom and legitimacy in decision-making. The Elders' Council is regarded as a sacred custodian of communal values, offering not just political advice but moral direction. Their authority comes not from wealth or force but from accumulated wisdom, lived experience, and the trust bestowed upon them by the people. They resolve disputes, interpret customs, and provide historical memory, thus anchoring the community in times of uncertainty.

Together, the youth, age-grades, and elders form a

continuum of leadership training that is both informal and deeply effective. Each stage of life contributes uniquely to the community: the youth provide energy, the age-grades provide organization, and the elders provide wisdom. This tripartite system ensures that governance in Aleyita is never divorced from cultural continuity, and that leadership is not the privilege of a few but the responsibility of all.

In the face of urbanization and modern schooling, these systems continue to adapt, with youth associations now extending their roles to include sports, advocacy, and education campaigns. Yet, at their core, the age-grade and elders' council remain vital symbols of Aleyita's belief that leadership is service, community is family, and wisdom is the inheritance of all.

4.3 Cultural Festivals and Artistic Expressions

Celebrating Our Identity

"In our celebrations, our ancestors dance with our children."

This accounts for a vibrant documentation of music, dance, costume, crafts, and festivals that serve as both artistic expression and community celebration. This section showcases events like the Ibegi and Oro

festivals as complex cultural performances that simultaneously entertain, educate, and unite community members while preserving and transmitting cultural knowledge and values. These festivals are not mere entertainment; they are living classrooms where younger generations learn history, etiquette, communal responsibility, and the spiritual connections between the people, their land, and their ancestors.

It further explores how traditional arts adapt to incorporate new materials and influences while maintaining their essential character, how festivals serve as occasions for community solidarity and cultural education, and how artistic expression provides outlets for creativity and innovation within traditional frameworks. Costumes that were once made exclusively from animal skins and local fibres now sometimes incorporate modern fabrics, yet their symbolic meaning; whether of fertility, bravery, or communal unity—remains undiminished. Similarly, masquerades that once performed strictly ritual functions now also play roles in cultural exhibitions and tourist attractions, thereby extending their significance into new audiences while retaining their sacred undertones.

Though religious transformation has muted certain traditional rites, cultural festivals remain a source of communal pride. These festivals are marked with drumming, dance, masquerades, and the use of local instruments such as the kwadum (drum), the flute, and traditional rattles. Music, in particular, is regarded as both an art and a spiritual act, believed to invoke ancestral presence and strengthen communal bonds.

The Gbagyi people's renowned dance, with graceful arm movements symbolizing the flight of a dove, is still performed at weddings, harvest ceremonies, and public celebrations, affirming identity and cultural resilience. This dance, sometimes accompanied by call-and-response songs, encapsulates the Gbagyi philosophy of peace, dignity, and beauty. Through these performances, the community demonstrates that cultural expression is not frozen in time but evolves with changing realities while continuing to function as a repository of identity.

In today's Abuja, where urbanization and modern influences threaten to erode indigenous practices, these festivals stand as loud affirmations of survival. They remind the people of Aleyita and their neighbours that

while skyscrapers may rise and highways may cut across old farmlands, the heartbeat of the people still resonates through drumbeats, chants, dances, and communal celebrations. Festivals and artistic expressions remain the indelible bridge between the past and the present, ensuring that future generations inherit not only land and name but also song, rhythm, and meaning.

CHAPTER FIVE

INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Building Bridges to Tomorrow

This chapter chronicles the social, physical transformation of Aleyita in terms of infrastructure, exploring how roads, schools, health facilities, and other modern amenities have changed daily life while creating both opportunities and challenges for community development. Like the construction of any building that must honour its foundation while reaching toward new heights, infrastructure development reflects the ongoing negotiation between preserving community character and embracing beneficial change.

5.1 Roads, Electricity, and Water Access

Connecting to the Modern World

"Every road opened is a bridge to new possibilities."

A chronicle of infrastructure development that reads like an adventure story of human ingenuity, community cooperation, and persistent effort to improve living conditions. The author traces the journey from footpaths to motorable roads, from kerosene lamps to electric lighting, from hand-dug wells to piped water systems, showing how each improvement transformed daily life

while creating new possibilities for education, health, and economic activity. Each milestone, though modest by metropolitan standards, carried immense meaning for the people of Aleyita. A road did not simply shorten the distance to the market; it connected families, expanded trade, and gave school children safer passage. A water pipe was not just a utility; it was dignity restored to women and children who had spent countless hours fetching water from streams. Electricity, even in its erratic form, symbolized the community's arrival into a modern era where evenings could be devoted not only to rest but also to study, enterprise, and shared family life.

The expansion of Abuja city has brought both opportunities and hardships. Roads and a pedestrian bridge now link Aleyita to the major arteries in the FCT metropolis, largely due to the lobbying efforts of the District Head. These linkages have facilitated mobility, encouraged commerce, and attracted new settlers, blending the rural and urban into a living mosaic. Yet, with these opportunities also came pressures land acquisition disputes, increased population density, and the gradual erosion of farmland that once defined the community's sustenance.

However, electricity supply remains erratic, and water is obtained through boreholes and community efforts. The community's resilience is seen in the way families contribute resources to sink boreholes, repair transformers, and self-organize in road maintenance. Such cooperative spirit is a reminder that development in Aleyita has always been built from below, with external assistance playing only a supportive role.

The story of Aleyita's infrastructure is, therefore, not only a tale of physical transformation but also one of collective struggle, cultural adaptation, and visionary leadership. It demonstrates how a community, though situated at the margins of a modern capital city, continues to shape its own destiny by weaving tradition, cooperation, and innovation into its development journey.

5.2 Educational Institutions and Literacy Trends

Opening Minds, Opening Futures

"In the twenty-first century Education lights, the path between tradition and innovation."

This account is an inspiring journey from old traditional education systems based on apprenticeship, observation, and oral instruction to formal schools that

opened doors to national and international opportunities. The author traces the establishment of primary and secondary schools, the growth of literacy rates, adult education programmes, and the ongoing relationship between traditional and modern forms of learning.

In the earliest days, education in Aleyita was inseparable from daily life. Children learned by watching their elders; boys accompanied fathers to the farms and the hunt, while girls learned domestic skills, food preservation, and craftwork from mothers and grandmothers. Knowledge was transmitted orally, through folktales, proverbs, and songs, ensuring that every lesson was bound to memory and moral instruction. Apprenticeship in blacksmithing, weaving, or farming was more than skill acquisition; it was cultural immersion, a means of preserving Gbagyi identity.

With the advent of colonial influence and missionary activity, formal education began to take root. The first classrooms, often modest mud structures with thatched roofs, marked a profound shift in the community's outlook. Reading and writing introduced a new world of

possibilities, creating pathways to employment in civil service, teaching, and health professions. Aleyita recalls with pride how the Native Authority of the pre-independence era once sponsored Gbagyi youths to teacher training and nursing colleges. Such investments produced a pioneering generation of educated men and women who later returned to uplift their communities.

Today, education remains a pillar of aspiration as Aleyita hosts a public primary school, junior and senior secondary schools, and several private schools. Literacy rates are rising, though resource constraints persist in the form of inadequate classrooms, insufficient textbooks, and limited access to scholarships. Yet, the community's determination is firm. Parents make significant sacrifices to ensure their children attend school, sometimes pooling resources to provide uniforms, learning materials, and even teacher support.

The people of Aleyita celebrate education as a pathway to empowerment. Graduates from the community now serve in various professions across Nigeria and beyond, demonstrating that education not only transforms individuals but also uplifts the entire community. At the same time, elders continue to emphasize the value of

traditional knowledge; agricultural skills, communal values, and oral wisdom; arguing that true education must harmonize both worlds. In this balance lies the hope of raising a generation rooted in their cultural identity yet capable of competing in a globalized society.

5.3 Healthcare and Social Services

Healing Bodies, Healing Communities

"Healing happens when ancient wisdom meets modern knowledge."

This book documents the establishment of health centres, improved access to modern medicines, and public health programmes while honouring the continuing relevance and effectiveness of indigenous medical knowledge and healing practices. The journey of healthcare in Aleyita reveals both progress and persistence, a story where modern science and traditional wisdom continue to walk side by side.

The community maintains a primary health care centre, yet residents lament the absence of a fully functional hospital. Mothers and children benefit from immunization campaigns, antenatal services, and outreach by government health workers. These efforts

mark a significant departure from the pre-1976 era, when access to medical facilities was scarce, and most ailments were treated within the confines of the family or by local healers. Compared to that era, access to healthcare has undoubtedly improved. However, limitations in staffing, equipment, and medicines mean that the promise of modern health services is only partially realized.

In response to these gaps, many still depend on herbal remedies and private clinics when government facilities fall short. The knowledge of medicinal plants, passed down through generations, continues to offer reliable alternatives for common illnesses such as malaria, stomach ailments, and skin infections. Local healers remain respected figures, combining spirituality with herbal science to treat conditions that are both physical and metaphysical in nature. For many, the choice between modern and traditional medicine is not an either-or situation but a careful balancing of both systems.

Public health initiatives have also played a role in shaping community wellbeing. Programmes for safe drinking water, sanitation, and vaccination have

reduced mortality rates and improved life expectancy. Nevertheless, the absence of a fully equipped hospital in Aleyita means that residents must often travel to city centre to access specialized care. This places financial and emotional burdens on families, especially during emergencies.

Healthcare in Aleyita, therefore, is not only a measure of medical services but also of community resilience. The people continue to advocate for the upgrading of their health centre into a modern hospital, even as they rely on the wisdom of their ancestors to fill the gaps. This blending of tradition and modernity exemplifies the Gbagyi spirit of adaptation; holding fast to heritage while embracing change. It is a reminder that healing, in its truest form, is not only about curing illness but about nurturing the body, the spirit, and the community as a whole.

5.4 Market Structures and Public Facilities

Spaces for Commerce and Community

"Markets are where commerce and community meet."

This provides a detailed examination of how markets, community centres, and public squares function as

economic hubs and social gathering places, revealing the sophisticated understanding of space, social interaction, and community building embedded in both traditional and modern community planning approaches. In Aleyita, the market has never been merely a place of exchange but a heartbeat of communal life; a stage where relationships are nurtured, news is shared, and cultural identity is reinforced.

Markets remain vibrant, though modest. Aleyita is historically famed as a centre of locust bean trade, attracting buyers from across the area. For decades, the sight and smell of processed locust beans used to flavour soups and stews defined the local economy and sustained many households. Beyond this, yams, grains, vegetables, and livestock have formed the backbone of trade, with women traditionally playing a dominant role in market activity. Informal petty trading has grown as farmland diminished due to urban expansion, reshaping livelihoods while sustaining household income. These markets not only provide food and goods but also serve as informal credit systems, where trust and reciprocity guide transactions.

Public facilities, including a Power Holding Company of Nigeria (NEPA) office and local council structures, reflect partial but uneven development. While electricity has extended to the community, supply remains irregular, forcing reliance on generators and solar alternatives. The presence of AMAC council structures symbolizes government recognition of Aleyita's importance, yet gaps remain in the provision of adequate civic amenities such as recreational parks, libraries, and modern markets.

The chief palace and primary school open spaces continue to play critical roles in maintaining cohesion. Palace squares double as meeting grounds for elders' councils, youth gatherings, and cultural festivals, sustaining a sense of identity even as the village integrates into the Federal Capital Territory's rapid urbanization. These spaces are also vital in dispute resolution and decision-making processes, reinforcing the Gbagyi tradition of consensus and communal responsibility.

Taken together, the markets and public facilities of Aleyita demonstrate how economic life and social life are intertwined. The community's modest but resilient

infrastructure reflects both its historical roots and its aspirations for modernity. While challenges remain, particularly in upgrading facilities and ensuring equitable access, the enduring vibrancy of Aleyita's market and communal spaces affirms the people's capacity to adapt and thrive.

5.5 Effects of Abuja Expansion on Aleyita Community

When the City Comes to the Village

"Change is like the wind - it cannot be stopped, but it can be channeled."

This provides a complex analysis of how urbanization and major infrastructural projects have transformed indigenous landholding patterns, lifestyle practices, and community relationships. It examines both the opportunities and challenges created by growth in the Federal Capital Territory, showing how communities benefit from urban development while protecting their cultural identity and community character.

No doubt, the creation of Abuja in 1976 reshaped Aleyita profoundly. Lands once used for farming were appropriated by government without compensation, creating immense tension and deep wounds that

continue to shape community memory. The fertile fields that once sustained families with yam, millet, sorghum, and maize gave way to survey plans, road networks, and construction sites. For a people whose identity and survival are tied to the land, dispossession was not just an economic loss but a cultural rupture.

The African University of Science and Technology (AUST) and the African Technology Village now sit on what was once Aleyita farmland. While these projects brought visibility to the community, placing its name on national and international maps, they also curtailed livelihoods, forcing many into waged labour, construction work, and petty trade. For elders who remember the days when the land was both farm and sacred trust, this shift represents a bittersweet exchange; modernity for continuity, development for displacement.

Yet, urban expansion has not been without opportunities. Roads, pedestrian bridges, and proximity to Abuja's city centre have improved mobility and access to markets. Young people find employment in construction, transport, and informal trade linked to the city's growth. The presence of universities and research

centres has created the possibility, even if still distant, of scholarships, collaborations, and knowledge transfer.

Still, the heart of the issue remains the struggle for rightful compensation and recognition of ancestral ownership. The story of Aleyita mirrors that of many indigenous communities in the FCT: caught between the necessity of national development and the duty of cultural preservation. The people of Aleyita continue to call for justice not only in financial terms but in respectful inclusion, cultural recognition, and infrastructural investment.

The lesson here is that urban development need not erase indigenous communities. Aleyita shows that tradition and modernity can walk hand in hand if planners, policymakers, and community leaders choose dialogue over dispossession. The resilience of the community, despite displacement, reveals a determination to remain visible and relevant in the very heart of Nigeria's capital city.

5.6 Land Disputes, Compensation, and Resettlement

Navigating the Politics of Place

"Justice requires both speaking truth and seeking understanding."

This provides a frank and balanced examination of the challenges created by land acquisition for urban development, including struggles over fair compensation, adequate consultation, and the cultural costs of displacement. It goes further to evaluate government policies and community responses with honesty and nuance, avoiding both victimization narratives and uncritical acceptance of development policies.

One of the gravest challenges has been the absence of compensation for appropriated land. Aleyita indigenes express deep pain at seeing ancestral lands fenced off for development projects; lands where their forefathers farmed, prayed, and raised generations. To the people, land is not merely an economic asset but a sacred trust, inherited from the ancestors and held in stewardship for the unborn. Its alienation without recognition feels like a dispossession of both heritage and dignity.

Government policies on land acquisition in the Federal Capital Territory have often prioritized rapid infrastructural development over community consultation. While the Abuja Master Plan envisioned orderly expansion, the lived reality for Aleyita has been abrupt displacement, with little or no inclusion in decision-making processes. Promises of resettlement or compensation are rarely fulfilled, creating a climate of mistrust and frustration.

Efforts at dialogue with authorities continue, but resolution remains elusive. The community has repeatedly sought avenues for negotiation through appeals, meetings with FCT administrators, and appeals to political leaders, yet outcomes have been slow and inconsistent. The result is a population caught between the march of urbanization and the longing for justice.

Despite these tensions, the people of Aleyita have shown remarkable resilience. Many have adapted by diversifying into wage labour, construction, and petty trading. Others continue to press for legal recognition of their rights. Community elders emphasize that their struggle is not against development itself but for fairness development that acknowledges the sacrifices

of indigenous communities and ensures that they are not erased from the story of Abuja's growth.

Ultimately, the challenge of land disputes, compensation, and resettlement in Aleyita is a mirror of Nigeria's broader dilemma: how to reconcile the demands of modern urbanization with respect for indigenous heritage and human dignity. The unresolved question is not only about land but about justice, inclusion, and the possibility of building a city where tradition and modernity coexist in harmony.

5.7 Population Growth, and Changing Demographics

“A Community in Motion without wisdom loses its soul.”

An insightful investigation of how rural-urban migration, inter-ethnic marriages, increased population density, and new settlements are reshaping community identity while creating opportunities for cultural exchange, economic development, and social innovation.

Migration has increased Aleyita's population. Once a purely Gbagyi hamlet, it is now a multi-ethnic settlement of tenants and settlers. The pull of Abuja as

Nigeria's capital city has brought people from across the country; farmers seeking fertile land, artisans searching for markets, civil servants working in the metropolis, and labourers drawn by the promise of daily income. This steady influx has transformed Aleyita into a vibrant mosaic of cultures, languages, and livelihoods.

Despite demographic shifts, the original Gbagyi identity and authority remain respected. The institution of the District Head (Hakimi) and the council of elders continue to serve as custodians of tradition and arbiters of local affairs. Even settlers and tenants, though diverse in ethnic and religious backgrounds, acknowledge the cultural and historical primacy of the indigenous community. This respect for indigenous leadership has fostered a degree of harmony and coexistence that distinguishes Aleyita from some neighbouring settlements where tensions over land and identity have flared.

Inter-ethnic marriages have also reshaped the social fabric, creating families where children grow up speaking multiple languages, absorbing values from both Gbagyi heritage and other Nigerian traditions. Such unions broaden social networks and serve as

informal bridges of cultural diplomacy, weaving together the threads of Nigeria's diversity within a single community.

However, population growth has also brought challenges. Increased demand for housing has led to informal settlements and rising pressure on land, schools, water, and health facilities. The once expansive farmlands have given way to clusters of housing developments, changing both the landscape and the rhythm of life. The community now negotiates the delicate balance between growth and sustainability, striving to ensure that expansion does not erode the cultural roots that define its essence.

Yet within these changes lie opportunities. Aleyita's growing diversity has stimulated economic development by creating markets for varied goods and services. New social networks have fostered innovation in trade, education, and civic engagement. In many ways, the transformation of Aleyita mirrors Nigeria itself: a place of pluralism where cultural resilience and adaptation go hand in hand.

The challenge for the future is to sustain this delicate balance; embracing diversity and growth while ensuring

that the heartbeat of Gbagyi identity continues to resonate at the centre of Aleyita's communal life.

5.8 Security, Environmental Issues, and Civic Participation

Protecting Our Present, Preserving Our Future

"The earth does not belong to us; we belong to the earth."

This is a comprehensive examination of contemporary challenges including community policing initiatives, environmental degradation concerns, waste management solutions, and participation in modern democratic governance structures at ward and council (local government) levels.

Security in Aleyita is remarkably stable, a point often praised by neighbours. Unlike other rapidly urbanizing communities where crime rates have risen, Aleyita has managed to preserve a sense of safety through collective vigilance and the enduring authority of traditional structures. The community took the initiative to build a police post, though not fully equip it with the necessary resources and manpower. This police post stands as both a symbol of communal determination and a reminder of the state's unfinished responsibility to grassroots

security. In practice, residents still rely heavily on neighbourhood watch, elders' councils, and youth associations to resolve disputes and prevent crime, thereby blending modern policing ideas with age-old indigenous practices of vigilance.

Environmental challenges, however, remain pressing. The loss of farmland due to urban expansion has created both economic strain and ecological imbalance. Deforestation, often driven by the demand for firewood and building materials, threatens the natural cover that once defined Aleyita's landscape. Waste disposal is another growing concern, as population density rises and modern consumer practices generate more refuse than traditional systems can absorb. Though households still engage in communal clean-up days, the need for sustainable waste management through recycling, designated dumpsites, and government-backed sanitation projects has become urgent.

Yet, amid these challenges, civic participation thrives as one of Aleyita's most remarkable strengths. Youth associations organize sports events, cultural festivals, and communal labour, not only strengthening unity but also offering alternatives to idleness and social vices. Women's groups, long recognized as the backbone of

community welfare, take active roles in food security, petty trading, and neighbourhood support systems. Church fellowships also serve as platforms for social cohesion, providing moral guidance while doubling as informal forums for community deliberations.

At the formal level, participation in ward and council elections is robust, reflecting both political consciousness and the determination of residents to shape their destiny in the Abuja Municipal Area Council. This active civic life demonstrates that Aleyita is not merely a passive recipient of development policies but a community that seeks to engage constructively with the democratic structures of the state.

In all, Aleyita's story of security, environment, and civic participation is one of resilience: a community that, despite limited state intervention, continues to mobilize its people, protect its heritage, and chart pathways for sustainable coexistence in a fast-changing Federal Capital Territory.

CHAPTER SIX

VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Dreaming Forward, Building Tomorrow

This final chapter looks toward the future with hope and practical wisdom, exploring strategies for maintaining cultural identity while embracing beneficial change, for building on traditional strengths while developing new capabilities, and for participating fully in National development while contributing distinctive community values and perspectives. Like traditional ceremonies that honor the past while blessing the future, this chapter bridges memory and aspiration.

6.1 Indigenous Knowledge and Cultural Continuity

Keeping the Sacred Fire Burning

"Culture is not a museum piece; it is a living river that flows from past to future."

This is an inspiring exploration of practical strategies for language conservation, intergenerational storytelling, cultural education integration in school curricula, and the documentation of traditional knowledge systems. This book therefore proposes concrete approaches for maintaining cultural identity while preparing young people for success in a

globalized world.

The elders of Aleyita believe that survival lies in preserving the wisdom of the ancestors, agricultural knowledge, dispute resolution customs, and respect for the land. These values are not simply relics of the past; they are living systems of knowledge that have sustained the Gbagyi people through centuries of change. By honouring the oral traditions and everyday practices of the community, Aleyita ensures that its cultural heritage remains relevant in guiding social harmony and collective resilience.

Language preservation stands at the heart of this vision. The Gbagyi tongue, rich with idioms, proverbs, and expressions, carries within it the philosophy of the people. To lose the language would be to lose an entire worldview. Thus, deliberate strategies are needed such as incorporating Gbagyi into school lessons, encouraging its use at home, and producing written records of folktales and histories.

Intergenerational storytelling remains one of the most powerful means of cultural transmission. Around the hearth or under the shade of the locust bean trees, elders

have traditionally passed down wisdom, myths, and values to the youth. This practice must be sustained and formalized through cultural clubs, community reading sessions, and heritage days in schools. By doing so, children not only learn their history but also cultivate pride in their identity.

Equally important is the documentation of traditional knowledge systems. The farming techniques that harmonize with the seasons, the rituals that protect the environment, and the mechanisms for conflict resolution are part of a vast intellectual heritage. Recording these systems in community archives, school curricula, and even digital platforms ensures their survival and adaptation to modern contexts.

The aspiration of the Aleyita elders is therefore clear: to document these traditions in schools and communal platforms so the younger generation may inherit a proud identity. In this way, cultural continuity is not left to chance but consciously nurtured. The community's heritage becomes not only a memory of the past but also a compass for navigating the future. It is in this balance between safeguarding tradition and embracing modernity that Aleyita envisions its enduring survival in a globalized world.

6.2 Education, Innovation, and Human Capital

Preparing Our People for Tomorrow's Opportunities

"The best investment any community can make is in the minds and hearts of its children."

This section provides a forward-thinking analysis of educational reform, technology integration, skills development, and lifelong learning strategies that can prepare Aleyita youth for leadership in the 21st-century economy while maintaining strong connections to their cultural roots and community values. Education is seen as the bridge between indigenous heritage and modern survival. The vision is to empower young people not only with certificates but with entrepreneurial skills, digital literacy, and cultural pride.

In the perspective of Aleyita, education must be understood not only as schooling but as a holistic process of knowledge transfer embracing both the wisdom of the ancestors and the innovations of the modern age. This dual approach ensures that while young people acquire scientific and technological skills, they also remain grounded in the language, traditions, and value systems that define their Gbagyi identity.

Educational reform in the community therefore calls for

strengthening local schools, improving access to quality teachers, and integrating vocational and digital skills training into the curriculum. Beyond formal classrooms, mentorship from elders, community service, and intergenerational storytelling should be positioned as complementary avenues of learning. In this way, children and youth can become both custodians of culture and pioneers of progress.

Technology integration, especially in areas such as ICT, renewable energy, and agricultural innovation, must be pursued deliberately. Digital literacy will not only open opportunities for employment but also equip Aleyita's young people to participate in the knowledge economy and engage with global platforms while showcasing their indigenous heritage.

Furthermore, the community must promote lifelong learning strategies. Adults, women, and artisans should also have access to functional literacy, micro-skills training, and innovation hubs that support entrepreneurship and self-reliance. By doing so, Aleyita would nurture a human capital base that is adaptable, innovative, and competitive.

Ultimately, education in Aleyita should not be reduced to a pursuit of certificates alone. Rather, it must embody

a philosophy of empowerment—one that produces individuals with practical skills to create opportunities, the cultural pride to protect their heritage, and the ethical foundation to lead with integrity. Only by balancing modern competencies with indigenous values can the people of Aleyita fully prepare for tomorrow's opportunities and ensure sustainable community development.

6.3 Community-Led Development Strategies

Building from Within

An empowering discussion of cooperative enterprises, women-led initiatives, youth entrepreneurship programmes, and agricultural innovation strategies that strengthen community resilience and reduce dependence on external assistance while creating sustainable local employment and income generation. Such strategies are not merely economic; they are also cultural, as they embody the long-standing Gbagyi values of solidarity, reciprocity, and self-reliance. By organizing themselves around cooperative ventures, the people of Aleyita can pool resources, share risks, and amplify their collective bargaining power in ways that honour both tradition and modern enterprise.

The people of Aleyita envision a future where community-led development aligns with government developmental projects. This vision calls for partnership rather than dependency, ensuring that while state agencies provide infrastructural support, the community itself defines its priorities and drives implementation. In this sense, development becomes participatory, giving the people ownership of their destiny.

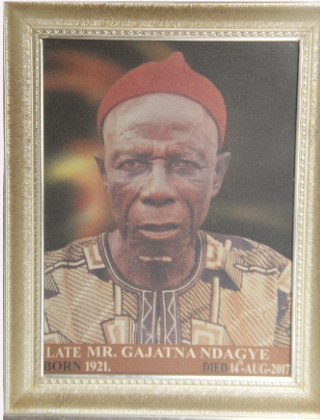
Priorities include: completion of the abandoned fencing of the community, upgrading the health centre, creating a modern market, and negotiating rightful compensation for ancestral lands occupied by the government. These priorities reflect not only material needs but also the deeper quest for dignity, recognition, and justice. For example, the fencing project is not simply about boundaries; it is about protecting community identity and security. Similarly, the call for rightful compensation for ancestral lands is about honouring history and ensuring fairness in Abuja's broader urban transformation.

Agricultural innovation remains central to this vision. By introducing improved farming techniques, irrigation systems, and cooperative marketing channels, the

community will be able to ensure food security while also creating opportunities for agribusiness. Youth entrepreneurship programmes, especially in ICT, agro-processing, and creative industries, can unlock the ingenuity of the younger generation, while women-led initiatives in crafts, small trade, and food production can expand the economic base and foster inclusivity.

The ultimate dream is a community where tradition and modernity walk hand in hand; where the sound of drums is not silenced by urbanization, but rather resonates alongside the hum of development. In this dream, cultural festivals and communal gatherings coexist with modern schools, hospitals, and enterprises. It is a vision of balance a community that remembers its roots while reaching for the future, a people whose identity remains intact even as they embrace progress.

PHOTO GALLERY I FAMILY



Late Chief Gajatna Ndagye



HRM Late Mrs. Shinkpe Gajatna



**HRH Ibrahim Gajatna Aleyita
District Head of Aleyita**



HRM Mrs. Afiniki Gajatna



The Family of HRH Ibrahim Gajatna Aleyita

PHOTO GALLERY II AWARDS

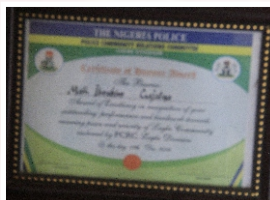
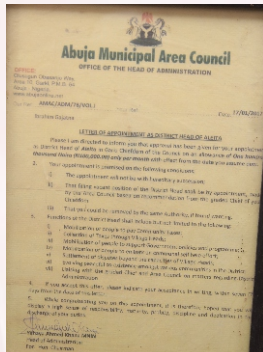
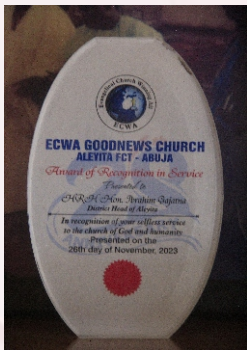


PHOTO GALLERY III PALACE



**District Head of Aleyita
Palace Entrance**



**HRH Ibrahim Gajtna Aleyita
District Head of Aleyita**



District Head of Aleyita Palace



Grand Prince of Aleyita



Seat of Throne



Cross Sections of natives of Aleyita

PHOTO GALLERY IV PUBLIC AMENITIES INFLUENCE BY CHIEF



About the Editors



SC IGOMU, JOSEPH AUGUSTINE PhD

FCMsp, AMIPMA, AMISM, MICPA, MIRC, MACCE, MICPN, MAMN, AMANPA, mpi, AMICMC, SACCE, MODeLan, MSPSP

Dr. Igomu, Joseph Augustine is a graduate of the Prince Abubakar Audu University Anyigba, Kogi State-Nigeria (formerly Kogi State University Anyigba). He is a seasoned academic and security expert with over ten years' professional experience in both public service and academia. He was born into the family of Chief Augustine Itodo Igomu of Effa - Ugbokolo, Okpokwu Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria.

He began his academic voyage with a Bachelor of Science (B.Sc Hons) degree in Management in 2008 at

the Kogi State University Anyigba, Kogi State-Nigeria, followed by a Master of Science (M.Sc) degree in Management from the same institution in 2013. He took his quest for academics a notch higher when he earned a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Business Administration, with specialization in Strategic Management, from the Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Anambra State-Nigeria in 2019.

An avowed researcher, Dr. Igomu has vast expertise in areas such as strategic management, entrepreneurship, public administration, security management, peace / conflict studies, inmates' classification and corrections administration. He has completed various professional certifications, including a diploma in computer applications, a specialized training in entrepreneurship development by the Central Bank of Nigeria, security management, gender policy, mediation, peace and conflict resolution.

Dr. Igomu is a Superintendent of Corrections (SC) with the Nigerian Correctional Service (NCoS), with extensive experience in corrections administration. He is currently acting head, education unit at NCoS national headquarters Abuja-Nigeria. He has served in key roles

such as PhD research scholar and administrative officer at the education unit, training and staff development directorate, national headquarters NCoS in Abuja-Nigeria. In 2024, he served as directing staff at the Armed Forces Command and Staff College Jaji - Kaduna, where he contributed immensely to training on internal security and low-intensity conflict operations.

In addition to his role in Nigerian Correctional Service, Dr. Igomu is a dedicated academic, serving as a visiting lecturer (instructional facilitator and project supervisor) at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) in Abuja-Nigeria. He is also a visiting research fellow at AUS American Institute of Applied Science in Switzerland. He is a Scholar of the African Council for Communication for Education (SACCE), Nigerian-Chapter. His contributions are underscored by his extensive publication record, covering research interests in general management, strategic management, entrepreneurial development to peace studies, security studies and information communication technology. His works are regularly featured in reputable academic journals and edited conference proceedings. He is a member of several editorial boards. Dr. Igomu is passionate about

mentoring and chaperoning future leaders in management sciences.

Dr. Igomu is an active member of several professional organizations, including, the Academy of Management Nigeria, Institute of Strategic Management of Nigeria-Chartered, Chartered Institute of Corporate Management and Strategic Planning, Institute of Professional Managers and Administrators of Nigeria, African Council for Communication for Education (ACCE), Nigeria-Chapter, the International Corrections and Prisons Association, the Institute of Criminology and Penology of Nigeria, The Institute of Chartered Mediators and Conciliators, Nigeria, Open and Distance e-Learning Association of Nigeria (ODELan) and Society for Peace Studies and Practice (SPSP), contributing to the advancement of public sector management, education and security in Nigeria.

Dr. Igomu professional achievements are celebrated through multiple awards, including the Merit Award as the Overall Best in Academics (1st Position) at the Nigerian Prisons Training College Kirikiri, Apapa-Lagos, 18th Assistant Superintendent of Prisons (ASP Cadet) Basic Course for General Duty Officers from 6th

May - 30th October 2015, Merit Scholarship Award by David Mark Scholarship Foundation for PhD Tuition Fee for One (1) Academic Session at the Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka, Nigeria 2015/2016 Session, PhD Merit Award by the School of Postgraduate Studies, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka-Nigeria at the Fifth (5th) Convocation Ceremony held at the University Convocation Arena 12th March, 2020, Membership of Peace Institute (mpi) Award by the National Peace Academy (NPA) of the Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution Abuja 28th September, 2021, PhD Attainment Award by Committee of Mature Minds, Ugbokolo, Benue State December, 2021 and Political Advisers' Course 1/22 Participant Award by Martin Luther Agwai International Leadership and Peacekeeping Centre Jaji - Kaduna from 15th - 29th July, 2022. The Faculty of Management Sciences at Prince Abubakar Audu University (PAAU) Special Award as a "Shining Star" during the inaugural Management Week and Reunion Day celebration, 2024.



ACC (Prince) Ishaku Ibrahim, AICMC, mpi, (PhD InView)

Assistant Controller of Corrections (ACC) Ishaku Ibrahim, born on 5th May, 1973, in Abuja, is a distinguished Nigerian Correctional Service professional. Hailing from the Federal Capital Territory, Abuja, he has demonstrated firm commitment to public service throughout his illustrious career in the NCoS.

He is currently studying for the award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Crises and Humanitarian Management at the University of Abuja. He holds an impressive array of academic qualifications, including a Master of Science (M.Sc) in Social Work from Ladoké Akintola University of Technology in 2023. He also holds a Master of Public Administration (MPA) from the

National Open University of Nigeria, a Master of Theology from the West African College for Christian Missions, Barnawa - Kaduna in 2010, Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) in Theology from the ECWA Theological College Karu - Abuja in 2013, Bachelor of Science (B.Sc Hons) degree in Public Administration from the University of Abuja in 2008 and Diploma in Marketing from the University of Jos in 1997, reflecting his commitment to continuous learning. Over the years, he has honed his expertise in correctional management, de-radicalization, classification and reformation initiatives through various courses, workshops, and training locally and internationally. His commitment to professional development is evidenced by memberships in prestigious organizations such as the Association of Nigeria Public Administration (ANPA) and the Institute of Chartered Mediators and Conciliators, Nigeria. Additionally, he is a proud member of the National Peace Academy and the Nigerian Army Resource Centre.

Ishaku distinguished career in the Nigerian Correctional Service, starting as a General Duty Officer in 1998 and culminating in his current role as administrative officer at the National Headquarters in Abuja, is a testimony to

his expertise in correctional administration. His roles have included special duties, training and staff development, and active participation in security courses, ensuring a robust foundation for effective leadership.

Ishaku leadership extends beyond his daily duties, as he actively contributes to various committees, playing key roles in the enhancement of correctional training institutions, curriculum development, and the implementation of critical correctional programmes like inmates' classification. He served as the Secretary for the Committee on Modalities to Improve on Nigerian Correctional Service Training Institutions and currently holds the position of Secretary for the Implementation Committee on the Take-Off Correctional Service Training College in Birnin Kebbi, Kebbi State.

His intellectual contributions extend to research and academic endeavors, with published articles on restorative justice, public administration, human capacity development, and the effects of social investment policies in Nigeria. His papers have been presented at international conferences, showcasing his

commitment to advancing knowledge in the fields of corrections and public administration.

Ishaku actively engages in community development services, coordinating efforts to facilitate the admission of candidates into tertiary institutions and contributing to the United Family Forum Aleyita Goodnews Church. In light of his outstanding contributions to the Nigerian Correctional Service, as the Organizing Committee the Review and Development of Training Curriculum for Correctional Service Training Institutions, coupled with his exemplary academic achievements and community involvement. His wealth of experience, leadership acumen, and dedication to service make him a valuable asset to the correctional system and an inspiration to his peers.

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LOCUST BEAN TREE

