



## **Initial Report for the Organization**

[Covering Activities from Inception (2005) through 2007]

**Including Ongoing Projects**

Prepared by Friends of Africa International, Inc.

## A Platform for Change in Africa

The mission of Friends of Africa International Inc. (FAI) is to promote human rights, social justice, democracy and good governance in Africa. It is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization designed to provide research-oriented policy advice, advocacy, training, and resources to regional and international institutions through its multifaceted programs in Africa. FAI activities are designed based on strong and extensive in-country research and study. FAI believes that as far as the role of government in Africa is concerned, designing good policies is important but not enough. Effective, fair and honest implementation of policies is crucial.

Given Africa's abundance of natural resources, human capital and natural plenty, it is hard to reconcile that so many countries and people are condemned to lives of poverty. Policies to attack poverty, unemployment, bad governance, inadequate health services, gender inequality, and other related issues, must not be viewed separately from broader economic and social policies. Therefore, the central mission of FAI is to integrate these broader policies with programs on the ground that make a concrete difference in the quality of people's lives. Thus, while the United States office of FAI is its global headquarters, the organization expends most of its resources on site in Africa.

## The Founding of FAI

Friends of Africa International (FAI) was founded in September 2005 by Ms. Onyeka Obasi, a public health professional and human rights activist, whose experience working in Africa and internationally has served as a model for the creation of FAI. With a diversity of academic and practical experiences in health, human rights and democracy, Ms. Obasi has contributed towards the realization of human rights and the establishment of true democracy in Africa.

Therefore, she is in a unique position to appreciate the interrelation of the many challenges facing governmental and non governmental institutions on the African Continent. It is this comprehensive vision that inspired Ms. Obasi to create FAI, which endeavors to pursue diverse programs in an integrated fashion.

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”*

*Margaret Mead  
Anthropologist  
(1901-1978)*

## FAI Programs and Projects

### Liberia 2005



In October 2005, FAI under-took a two-week fact-finding mission to Liberia. The mission was planned to coincide with the 2005 legislative and Presidential elections. FAI representatives observed the first round of elections, spoke about the present situation and the rebuilding process with officials from the Ministry of Health, many community-based organizations (CBOs), and local and international non-governmental organizations (NGOs and INGOs), as well as internally displaced persons and ordinary Liberians. Judicial reform, economic governance, security, the reinstatement of the rule of law and the re-establishment of basic health and education infrastructures are all critical issues that need to be prioritized in Liberia. A copy of the report is available on our website at [www.fAfrica.org](http://www.fAfrica.org).

## Senegal 2006



In June/July 2006, FAI participated at a women's leadership program in Dakar. At the same time, the organization visited two settlements of some of the 2005 flood victims in Senegal, as well as Medina Gounass. During the months of August and September 2005, the Senegalese capital Dakar and its impoverished suburbs were devastated by the heaviest rains seen in two decades with 5,600 people displaced by floods and thousands still living in water around their ankles. FAI visited these sites as well as the makeshift settlements. The purpose of this trip was central to the mission of FAI – to promote social justice and human rights. These displaced families see themselves as “the forgotten,” partly because they are not news anymore and the government seems to think that their case is settled.

The government of Senegal is in the process of re-settling these displaced communities. FAI is in the process of uploading to our website: a copy of the report, still images and an eight minute clip.

## XVI International AIDS Conference 2006

In August 2006, FAI participated at the *XVI International AIDS Conference* in Toronto Canada, where the President, Ms. Onyeka Obasi presented her study on “**HIV/AIDS Intervention Among the ECOMOG Military, focusing on Nigeria.**” Nigeria is one the highest troop-contributing countries to peacekeeping operations in ECOMOG, AU, etc. Military personnel have among the highest rates of HIV/AIDS of all occupational groups. Because they are sexually active with local civilian populations, military personnel can serve as a core transmission group to the larger population. This could pose a serious security issue in Africa.

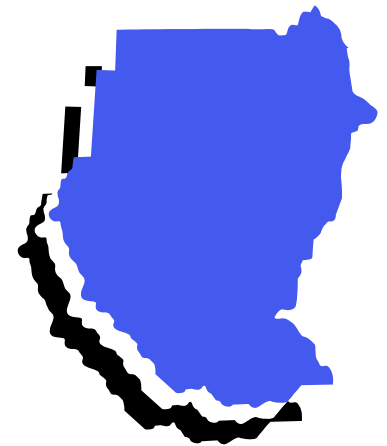
FAI was on site at the Global Village's International Marketplace. Being located in this dynamic environment, uniquely accessible to both delegates and non-delegates, allowed FAI to interact with other globally-minded and locally-active attendees, and communicate the mission of Friends of Africa International to promote human rights, social justice, democracy, and good governance in Africa – all of which are paramount concerns in the battle against the AIDS pandemic.



## Sudan 2006

### **“Capacity Building of Local Human Rights Non-Governmental Organizations, Lawyers and pro-Democracy Activists from Darfur Region (Western Sudan) on Human Rights and Democracy in Africa”**

In November 2006, in a joint effort to end the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Darfur region of western Sudan, FAI in collaboration with the Geneva based Darfur Relief and Documentation Center (DRDC), trained human rights defenders/activists from the Darfur region (Western Sudan). The goal of this phase was to equip human rights activists and defenders with the right tools to address the issues facing the people of Darfur using the rule of law and due process. This we believed could only be achieved if the people were trained and equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge. This was the first phase of a three-phase project. Participants also participated at the 42<sup>nd</sup> Ordinary Session of the African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights as well as NGO Forum. It was hoped that trained participants from this training workshop would co-facilitate the training of a larger group of civil society groups across Darfur during the second phase of this project in Sudan. The report is available upon request.



## UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) 2007

From February 26 – March 9, 2007, The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held its 51<sup>st</sup> session at United Nations Headquarters, New York. The Commission focused on the thematic issue entitled "The Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination and Violence Against the Girl Child." Friends of Africa International -- in collaboration with the Mission of Nigeria to the United Nations - held a major side event at the Mission of Nigeria on "Legislative Advocacy on Elimination of Violence and Discrimination Against the Girl Child." This involved panel discussions, participatory discussions and action plan. The unique story of one of the speakers Margaret Jayah, a survivor from Sierra Leone, inspired FAI to research on areas where the organization could start designing appropriate programs to suit the current situation in the country. Please visit our website for more information – [www.fafrika.org](http://www.fafrika.org).





## Pan African Youth Leadership Forum 2007



FAI believes that youth are among Africa's most precious resources. If equipped with skills and opportunities to contribute to national policy dialogue, African youth will be afforded the ability to stimulate socio-economic and political development that would enhance not only their own quality of life, but that of all Africans and of future generations. For a long-term plan, it is important for FAI to build a close partnership with the African Union and other regional institutions in order to advocate issues.

In June 2007, FAI convened the first annual Pan African Youth Leadership Forum in Accra Ghana. The theme of that Forum was "Democracy in Africa: Renewing the Vision." The week-long, international forum brought together a diverse group of some of the continent's committed young leaders and afforded them the unique opportunity to engage in constructive dialogue, and offer their expertise in addressing key issues relevant to the youth, democracy, and development of the continent. The report, action plans and recommendation from this first forum are available on our website.

# FAI Ongoing Programs and Projects

## Sudan

As a follow up to the Sudan project which FAI started in 2006, the second phase of the project will be organized in Khartoum. This will be in the form of a three day workshop of civil society groups from the three regions of Darfur including Khartoum. The overall goal of this second phase is to enable regional civil society groups within Darfur to fully understand and utilize existing human rights platforms in order to effectively engage the major problems and issues facing Darfur. Ultimately, this would allow for sustainable solutions to be obtained within the region through the efforts and endeavors of those people within the region itself.

The immediate beneficiaries of this phase of the project will be the participants selected for training. They will be educated in international and regional human rights systems and will receive training on how to properly and effectively operate within these systems in order to make progress in the region. Additionally, by providing these participants with education and training that they can use to improve the human rights and socio-economic standing of all the people in their region, this project ultimately intends to have many of the people in the region as beneficiaries of its work.



## Pan African Youth Leadership Forum II

Ensuring that the youth of Africa remain engaged with the social, economic, and political issues of their continent is an ongoing process. Great change requires great vision. African youth – those who believe in the ability of their continent to live up to its full potential – have the vision necessary for meaningful change in Africa. And in order for change to be effectively initiated and continually sustained, the youth of Africa need the knowledge, resources, and training that are crucial to ensuring that their visions can become a concrete and lasting reality.

Upon recommendations from the 1st PAYLF held in 2007, Friends of Africa International (FAI) decided to continue hosting the PAYLF event, once annually to coincide with the Africa Union Summit. Continuing the Forums provides an opportunity for young people to meet and interact with leaders that have contributed to positive change.

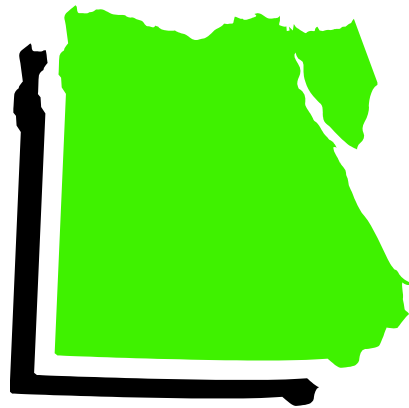
*“Education is a human right with immense power to transform. On its foundation rest the cornerstones of freedom, democracy and sustainable human development.”*

*Kofi Annan*

## Pan African Youth Leadership Forum II (continued)

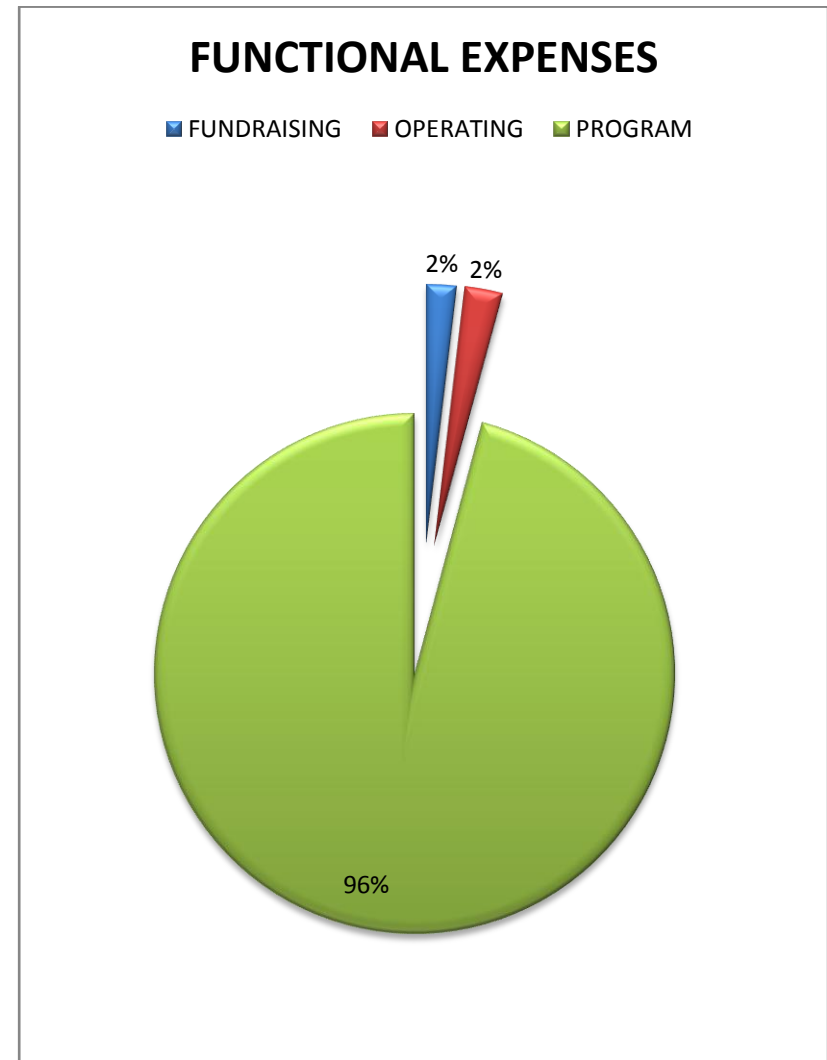
We expect the 2nd PAYLF to be a continuation of the success from the 1st Forum with a series of intensive dialogues, workshops, and break-out sessions with international experts from Africa and elsewhere. This will be accompanied by skills-building workshops, regional dialogues on plans of action, and processes and strategies for implementation. The experience of capacity-building, participation, and networking from planned activities and from one another is an invaluable experience for the delegates as well as for the future generation of the continent.

The theme of the upcoming Forum is "New Generation of Leaders: Young People Making Change in Africa."  
This second Forum is scheduled to take place in Egypt, June 2008.



## FAI Financial Information: 2006

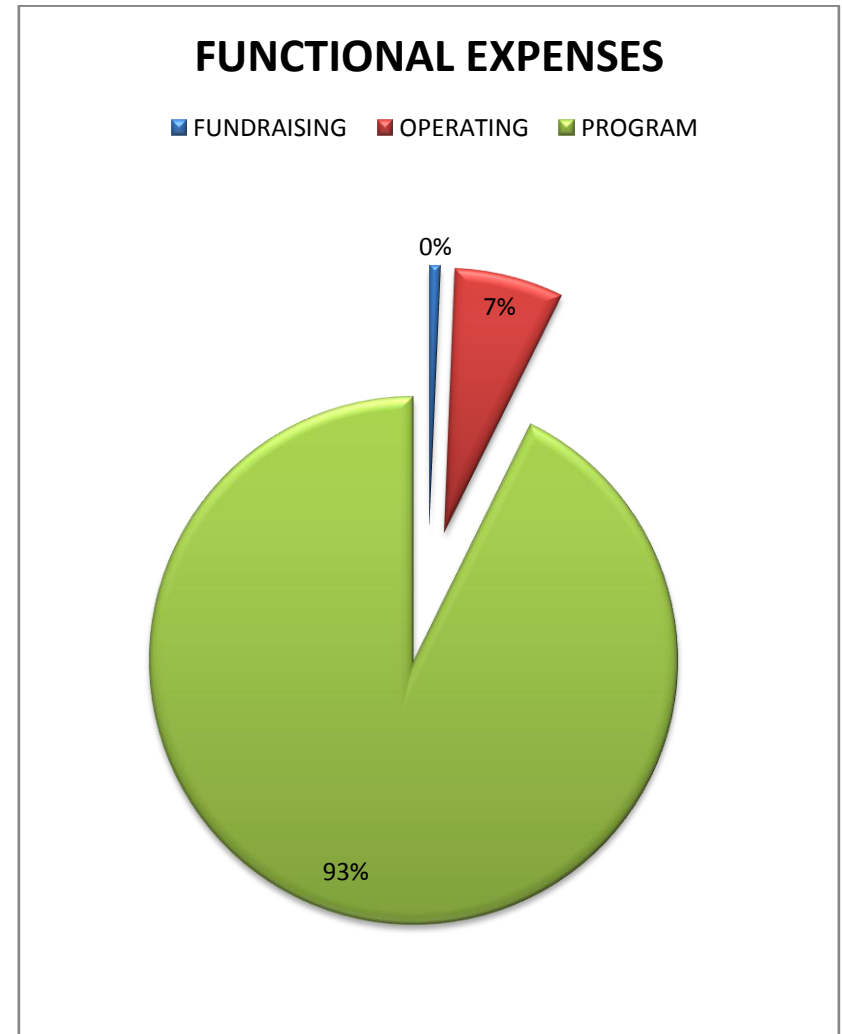
<b>CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	
<b>RESTRICTED</b>	<b>10,000</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED</b>	<b>1,646</b>
<b>GRANTS</b>	
<b>RESTRICTED</b>	<b>23,900</b>
<b><u>TOTAL INCOME</u></b>	<b><u>35,546</u></b>
<b>FUNDRAISING EXPENSE</b>	<b>650</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSE</b>	<b>830</b>
<b>PROGRAM EXPENSE</b>	<b>34,051</b>
<b><u>TOTAL EXPENSE</u></b>	<b><u>35,531</u></b>



\*All figures are in U.S. dollars.

## FAI Financial Information: 2007

<b>CONTRIBUTIONS</b>	
<b>RESTRICTED</b>	<b>16,380</b>
<b>UNRESTRICTED</b>	<b>10,965</b>
<b>GRANTS</b>	
<b>RESTRICTED</b>	<b>77,720</b>
<b><u>TOTAL INCOME</u></b>	<b><u>105,065</u></b>
<b>FUNDRAISING EXPENSE</b>	<b>665</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSE</b>	<b>6,989</b>
<b>PROGRAM EXPENSE</b>	<b>97,421</b>
<b><u>TOTAL EXPENSE</u></b>	<b><u>105,075</u></b>



\*All figures are in U.S. dollars.

## **FAI Funding**

FAI would like to thank our generous and dedicated supporters:

**Wolfensohn Family Foundation**

**Institute of International Education (IIE)/Ford Foundation**

**Open Society Institute (OSI)**

**Botwinick-Wolfensohn Family Foundation**

**African Women Development Fund**

**National Endowment for Democracy (NED)**

**Board Members and Individual Contributors**

## FAI Board, Advisors, and Staff

FAI is governed by by-laws and has the following governance and administrative structure: International Advisors, board of directors, regional coordinators from Africa, as well as Interns and Volunteers. The Advisory Board comprises ten international advisors appointed according to their capacities, e.g. law, human rights, gender mainstreaming, education, democracy and governance, electoral reform, grant writing, health, conflict mediation and peace advocacy, etc. They advise the board of directors and team members based on their relevant areas of specialty. The board of directors is responsible for the governance and financial management of the organization. The regional coordinators assist in designing projects in countries within their region based on results from needs assessment. Our committed volunteers and interns are professionals from diverse disciplines and expertise who are willing to assist the organization in accomplishing its set mission and goals.

*“Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable... Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals.”*

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

*(1929-1968)*



## **Advisory Board**

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**Prof. Stephen P Marks** Docteur d'état, Dipl. IHEI, Director, François-Xavier Bagnoud Center, Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard School of Public Health.

**Jackie Shapiro** Chair, NGO Committee on the Status of Women, NY (NGOCSW, New York) and First Vice President, Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in consultative relationship with the United Nations.

**Jed Weiner** Associate, Simpson Thacher Bartlett LLP, Citypoint, London.

**Mary-Ann Stephenson** Consultant and trainer in gender leadership and decision-making, Italy and U.K.

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**Tyler Steim** Information Officer for the AIDS Committee of Toronto; freelance journalist in Canada.

**Chidinma Iwu-Anyanwu** Pharmacist, Walgreens, Baltimore, Maryland.

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**Wilfred Iheanyichukwu** Temple University School of Pharmacy.

**Gabriel G. Matus, Esq.** Associate, Sheppard, Mullin, Richter & Hampton LLP, New York.

**Hannah Foster** Executive Director, African Center for Democracy and Human Rights Studies, The Gambia.

## **Staff**

**Melinda Downey** Program/Financial Advisor

**Katie Moore** Program Research.

**Mark Boffa** Development and Finance.

**Chinyere Osuala** Intern.

## **Contact Information**

[www.fafrika.org](http://www.fafrika.org)

**Head Office:** 676A 9th Avenue # 150 New York, NY 10036. USA  
Tel: 1 917 213 8710, Fax: 1 480 287 8290, Email: [info@fafrika.org](mailto:info@fafrika.org)

**West African Regional Office:** P. O. Box 4356; Benson Street (building housing PUL)  
Monrovia, Liberia. Tel: (231) 6522032/77050021. E-mail: [info@fafrika.org](mailto:info@fafrika.org)