



**WOMEN AND CHILDREN
ASSOCIATION**

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ACTIVITY REPORT 2024

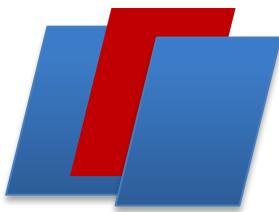




Since 1996, the date of the founding of the Association Femmes et Enfants, Pauline MATCHIM, Lawyer and adult trainer, who is its executive president, has been passionate about promoting the rights of women and children, with an emphasis on popularizing laws in which women, girls and children are involved.



A feminist activist and Generation Equality advocate, she was one of the co-organizers and co-facilitators of the virtual feminist advocacy training and community dialogue on generational equality, held from September 23 to 30, 2020. For her, sisterhood remains a value in a world where patriarchy is tough. Pauline has 29 years of experience in SRHR advocacy and activism and works on resilience with GBV survivors.



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ACRONYMS

AFE	: Women and Children Association
AGR	: Income Generating Activities
ANAJEHCAM	: National Association of Young Disabled People of Cameroon
PROJECT	: Association for the Promotion and Education of Disinherited Youth
ASEJEFÉ	: Association for the Development of Young Women
BUNEC	: National Civil Status Registration Office
CAL	: Coalition of African Lesbians
COFEPRE	: Collective of women for the environment and children
CORDAID	: Dutch Organization
CSU	: Universal Health Coverage
CS4ME	: Civil Society For Malaria Elimination
DAJEC	: District Delegation of Youth and Civic Education
DAPROFF	: District Delegation for the Promotion of Women and the Family
DSSR	: Sexual Rights and Reproductive Health
ECAM4	: Fourth Cameroonian Household Survey
EESI2 Cameroon	: Second Survey on Employment and the Informal Sector in Cameroon
EMAPUR	: Mobile Team for Urban and Rural Popular Animation
ERA	: They Shine Together
FGE	: Generation Equality Forum
GBVIMS	: Gender Based Violence Information Management System
GFW	: Global Fund for Women
GIZ	: German Agency for International Cooperation
GPD	: Gender, Peace and Development
UNHCR	: High Commission for Refugees
IAS	: International AIDS Society
IFFD	: Institute of the Francophonie for Sustainable Development
IPES	: Private Institute of Higher Education
IST	: Sexually Transmitted Infection
JIF	: International Women's Day



JIFI	: International Day of the Girl Child
JMFR	: World Day of Rural Women
MGF	: Female genital mutilation
MINAS	: Ministry of Social Affairs
MINJEC	: Ministry of Youth and Civic Education
MINPROFF	: Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family
MINSAN	: Ministry of Health
MoLo	: Mother's Love
ODD	: Sustainable Development Goals
IOM	: International Organization for Migration
OSC	: Civil Society Organization
PBA	: Peace Bus Association
PDI	: Internally Displaced Persons
PEAS	: Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse
PROMO2DEF	: Association for the Promotion of the Economy and Sustainable Development of Women's Entrepreneurship
RAFAMA	: Networks of Women's Associations of the Manjo District
REJEFEMAC	: Network of young feminists of Central Africa
SFF	: South Feminist Future
UAF-Africa	: Urgent-Action Fund-Africa
UNESCO	: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA	: United Nations Population Fund
VBG	: Gender Based Violence
HIV/AIDS	: Virus of human immunodeficiency /Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
WANET	: Women Advocacy Network
WCIC	: Women's Counseling and Information Centre.
WL	: Wake up Ladies
WP	: Word Pulse
WPS-HA	: Women, Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE PRESIDENT

The 2024 activity report allows us, our partners and our collaborators, to present an assessment of the work carried out throughout the past year, from January to December.

This practice observed by "Association Femmes et Enfants" for more than 15 years, requires us to have a summarized visual documents. It reports on all the actions carried out. It describes the context, the strategies used, presents the results in relation to the initial objectives and, if possible, provides forecasts for the following period.

Its purpose is to inform, reassure, retain and motivate our partners first and all those who will have to read it, for a better understanding of our vision and our different missions.

It must be recognized that the partnership with GLOBAL FUND FOR WOMAN since 2023 has a new given impetus to the work we carry out on Sexual Rights and Reproductive Health (SRHR).

This partner allowed us to highlight the problem of clandestine abortions, by carrying out work carried out in October 2023 in the WOURI Department, entitled "Study on contraceptive and abortion mal practices in the city of DOUALA".

The year 2024 saw the restitution of this work to our partners and also to the representative of Reproductive Health in the Littoral Region.

The activities carried out generally revolve around our targets. As in previous years, everything always starts with Youth Week, and ends with HIV Awareness Month, through Women's Rights Day, and the Sixteen Days of Activism against Violence against Women.

The particularity this year for the association was the reception of an AWARD dedicated to us by AFRICA WOMEN AWARD, and the training of Reproductive Health ambassadors in the cities of EDEA (Department of SANAGA MARITIME) and MANJO (Department of MOUNGO): training which leads them to understand according to the protocol of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights relating to the rights of women in Africa, and better known as the "Maputo Protocol", the right to exercise control over their fertility, the right to decide on their maternity, the number of children and the spacing of births, the free choice of contraceptive methods, the right to be protected and to protect themselves against STIs/HIV/AIDS, etc., in order to better move with their peers in their different living environments.

To learn more, I invite you to discover this document.

Thank you.



SUMMARY

For more than two decades, AFE has worked hard to defend the rights of women, girls and children through continuous education on SRHR and gender-based violence (GBV), and remains more committed than ever to these causes, working tirelessly to promote the Sustainable Development Goals.

Much of our work revolves around protecting children from actions or situations that may compromise their health development and well-being.

The "Association Femmes et Enfants" aligns itself with UNICEF's definition of child protection, which is to "prevent and respond to violence, exploitation and abuse against children". The dimensions of child protection are the measures and structures that prevent and respond to physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse; commercial sexual exploitation; child trafficking; child labor; domestic, school and community violence; as well as abusive traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation (infibulation/cutting) and child marriage.

Furthermore, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are transversal in our work and remain our compass. Thus, each of our activities carried out is linked to a sustainable development objective:

- ⊕ SDG 1.c and 1.3 for the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger;
- ⊕ SDG 2.c on the adoption of measures to ensure the proper functioning of food markets;
- ⊕ SDG3, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5 and 3.6 on health promotion;
- ⊕ SDG4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.7;
- ⊕ SDG 5 on gender equality: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5, 5.6, and 5b;
- ⊕ SDG 6 on access to water, 6.1 and 6.2; SDG 7b on energy;
- ⊕ SDG 8.3 on formal business creation,
- ⊕ SDG9.3 on access to credit and 9.5 on reducing the gaps between girls and boys in the use of IT tools;
- ⊕ SDG 10.1 on promoting the work of rural women and encouraging group sales;
- ⊕ SDG 13.3 to encourage rural women to adopt and adapt to new farming methods;
- ⊕ SDG 16.2 on protection and exploitation of children from sexual abuse and 16.3 on combating impunity for predators responsible for child rape.

The road seems long, of course, but we are sure that with small steps, we will get there.



PRESENTATION FROM THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1996, AFE is a women-led organization committed to defending the rights of women and children. We consider sexual and reproductive health rights to be a major component of human rights and an essential sustainable goal. GBV remains a field to be seriously explored, especially with the existence of gynecological and obstetric violence. We do not forget to mention the resilience work carried out with survivors.

In the 1996s, talking about children's rights and especially women's rights was not easy at all due to hostile context and an environment that was not at all favorable and which still persists to the limit. Since the BEIJING conference which remained the most revolutionary with its 12 critical areas, women's rights have experienced if not a certain evolution, at least small advances that always leave us hungry, given the feminist movement launched ages ago which still remains elitist.

Although no country in the world has yet achieved gender equality, obstacles remain numerous in Cameroon. It is important to raise awareness in time and out of time on the true meaning of equal rights. In popular imagery, many of our fellow citizens see in equal rights, only equality of physical strength.

In addition to the 1995 BEIJING conference, the following events were to seriously boost women's rights, namely: the creation of the 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and the 8 MDGs in the year 2000, the 17 SDGs in 2015 as well as the 6 themes of the action coalition with Women, Peace, Security and Humanitarian Action, as new objectives established during the 25th anniversary of the BEIJING conference in 2020, the year which

Despite everything, childhood is in distress and especially the little girl; there is an urgent need to support all children in the sense of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, through psychological help as well as complete and continuous education in sex education in schools: it is also an experience that we want to share with the younger generation. To support us in our activities, we use the "HELLO ADO" application, a pure UNESCO product.

Starting from the fact that we cannot work without families, we remain open to everyone, because everyone has the right to be educated according to the maxim "NO ONE SHOULD BE LEFT BEHIND." We are committed and we are.

saw the launch of "Generation Equality." Unfortunately, women in the South are still lagging behind, particularly those in Central Africa. We need to bring women up to speed, so that during intergenerational conversations, the younger generations understand what our difficulties are and know what to do to get around them and understand that they have work to do.



As a non-profit entity, we work with a diverse group of partners at the national level: academic institutions, sectoral governments, community organizations, faith-based organizations, United Nations agencies, as well as the media, despite the absence of the private sector, all with the aim of promoting human rights.

"Association Femmes et Enfants", declared under receipt No. 063 / RDDA / C19 / BAPP March 7, 1996 at the Prefecture of WOURI, has its headquarters in Douala, Littoral Region, with a focal point at Manjo, Sub-Division of MOUNGO DIVISION. The second focal point is located in Lebialem, DIVISION of LEBIALEM South-West Region and the third is located in Bafoussam, West Region, MIFI DIVISION.

Our Vision is a world without any discrimination against children, girls and women and where their rights are respected.

Our Mission is the promotion and defense of the fundamental rights of women, young girls and children on different levels, including political, educational, health, economic, environmental, civil, and cultural, life skills, as well as their empowerment which is the first shield against GBV.

Our Goals:

- Popularize the fundamental rights of women, girls and children through awareness-raising, education, mediation, studies and research;
- Defend the rights of women, girls and children through multifaceted assistance;
- Promote the feminist movement.
- Carry out relevant advocacy actions for better consideration of the needs of women, young girls and children in national and local public policies;
- Strengthen the economic and political powers of girls/women to take charge of their development/empowerment.

Our Values:

- Goodwill;
- Humility;
- Spirit of solidarity;
- Good morals.



SPOTLIGHT ON ACTIVITIES

This activity report is the fruit of the permanent and sustained collaboration of various institutions and several souls of good will who have sacrificed, directly or indirectly, what of their time, what of their intelligence and wisdom, what of the modest financial and logistical contributions, and I forget some...

Educating and informing women and children in both urban and rural areas about their rights is at the heart of our work with the aim of equipping them with the information needed to make informed and wise choices. Activities are presented chronologically throughout the year.

Activity
1

WORKSHOP FOR THE RESTITUTION OF THE STUDY CARRIED OUT BY AFE

Title: Contraceptive and abortion practices in the city of DOUALA

Date: Douala, February 2, 2024

Introduction

The Women and Children Association (AFE) received a grant from the Global Fund for Women (GFW), part of which was used to conduct a study on contraceptive and abortion practices in the city of Douala in Cameroon. In order to consolidate the research results and share them with the public, a restitution workshop was organized for this purpose on February 2, 2024 in the Peace Bus association meeting room.



Peace Bus association meeting room.

This document serves as a report. It is divided into three main parts.

1. Reminder of the objectives pursued and expected results

As planned in the terms of reference, the workshop aimed to contribute to the consolidation and dissemination of the results of the study through the inputs of the participants.

More specifically, it aims to:

- ✓ Present and discuss the results of the study;
- ✓ Develop, if necessary, recommendations and suggest perspectives.

Also, at the end of the workshop it was expected that:



- ✓ Participants were informed of the results of the study and expressed their views;
- ✓ Participants improved their knowledge of contraception and abortion practices.

2. The workshop process

2.1- National anthem

Under the animation of the representative of the District delegation of the Ministry of Youth and Civic Education, it was with the national anthem that the workshop was solemnly opened. It ended with the applause of the participants.

2.2- Welcome Word

It was delivered by the president of "Association Femmes et Enfants" (AFE), in the person of Pauline Matchim.

After the usual pleasantries, she thanked the participants for the favorable response given to the invitation addressed to them. She also set out the context in which the study whose results will be presented was conducted. In this case, she insisted on unwanted pregnancies and clandestine abortions as scourges that undermine the young population in general and those of childbearing age in particular. Finally, she expressed the hope that the discussions around the results would be fruitful and that the participants would return with new knowledge.



2.3- Presentation of the study results, discussions and recommendations

Carried out by the consultant, in the person of Charles Bertin TIMACK, this part was structured, apart from a brief introduction, around three main points.



This section highlighted the international and national context by focusing on conventions, statistics on contraceptive prevalence and

2.3.1- Context of the study and theoretical framework:

This part highlighted the international and national context by focusing on conventions, statistics on contraceptive and abortion prevalence. It then presented the objectives pursued and the methodology of the study.

2.3.2- Results of the study: Realities of contraceptive practices and abortion in Douala

It was here that the consultant presented the results of the survey conducted among 733 girls and women aged 15 to 49 for one month in five (05) communes out of the six in the city of Douala.

The results focused on the demographic profile of the populations surveyed, their knowledge about contraceptives and abortion, the use of contraceptives and the places where contraceptives are obtained, as well as recourse to abortion.

In addition, it was also a question of assessing the demand and supply of family planning services at the level of targeted hospital training.

2.3.3- Some points of interpretation and recommendations

In terms of points of interpretation, the study indexed issues related to gender, negative masculinities, patriarchal norms and the persistence of normative approaches to provision.

At the end the participants made some recommendations:

- Make family planning services more visible in health facilities. At present, when they exist, they are cramped;
- Address the issues of "clandestine abortions" and their consequences without fear in order to challenge all those who venture into them as well as those who lend themselves to them;



- Think carefully about communication around sex, by putting adolescents and young people at the center of the issue. Educational methods are evolving and it must be said that the time of taboo is over.
- Carry out local campaigns to reach populations in their different living environments;

2.4- Interviews and family photos

Three media outlets (03) were present and time was set aside for interviews with the various stakeholders, including the president, the consultant, the doctor responsible for reproductive health in the Littoral, and a few participants.

It was also the place to take general photos to immortalize the event.

2.5- Meal (Cocktail)

For the occasion, a cocktail was prepared for the participants.

3. Main observations from the workshop

3.1- Difficulties

The start of the workshop was delayed due to the slow arrival of participants. Initially scheduled for 9am, it actually started at 10:15am.

3.2- Results

- Different categories of expected stakeholders responded, health personnel, sectoral, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs): a total of 20 participants including 16 women and 4 men.
- The discussions were very fruitful with very active participation from those invited.
- Good impression of the participants regarding the study.



FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION DAY

18th edition

The objective is to raise awareness among the younger generations on the issues of female genital mutilation and excision that exist in some regions of Cameroon, in order to raise awareness of this harmful cultural practice. Due to the security crises observed in the country, the Littoral Region and the city of Douala are increasingly welcoming internally displaced populations from the North and Southwest due to the conflict there, as well as those from the far North due to the border war with the Islamic group BOKO HARAM. These displaced populations bring with them their cultural practices, which the inhabitants of Douala do not always understand. And in addition, remember that FGM is part of GBV, in the sexual assault category.

Several educational talks have been organized in high schools and colleges on what female genital mutilation is, the causes, the reasons and especially the consequences. FGM can cause psychological trauma, and especially the fear and anxiety of some survivors, of seeing their sisters, their daughters and granddaughters undergo the same ordeal.

This practice symbolically reinforces the traditionally inferior role of women in society. It is a question of reversing habits, because the consequences on mental health are very serious. Victims and/or survivors of this practice often suffer from hemorrhages, infections, sterility, and have difficulties when giving birth, which contributes to increasing the maternal mortality rate.

Despite the suffering endured, women do not always break the silence and very few are willing to oppose it. This practice can be classified as gynecological violence, where we realize that the woman is the perpetrator of violence; in this area as in that of childbirth, sisterhood is truly absent: the same is true for widowhood rites, polygamy, etc.

The day of the fight against FGM is celebrated on February 6 of each year, and this happens during the national week of Youth Day in Cameroon.

For this year, the Minister of Youth and Civic Education, President of the National Organizing Committee of the Youth Festival, gave as the theme of this 58th edition, "Youth, import, substitution and economic patriotism for the progress of Cameroon"

For several years, AFE has been a member of the voluntary commitment commission, appointed by the sub-prefect of Douala 5, headed by DAJEC staff and as members, other staff and associations.

This is the framework in which we worked this year. Several meetings were organized according to the schedule of activities adopted by agreement of the parties. All the descents were planned subject to modifications. Fortunately the forum created for this purpose helped to update the information of the members



of the said commission through regular information and excellent deployment on the ground.

The themes for raising awareness among students were selected based on the expertise of the committee members. These are:

- Practice of Female Genital Mutilation and sexual harassment in schools by the Association Femmes et Enfants (AFE) represented by Murriel NYAMBO
- The harmful effects of drugs in schools by the Association United Against Drugs (UAD) represented by Ms. MENDO;
- The importance of mental health and managing emotions, by the "Association Encadrement de la Petite Enfance" (EPE) represented by Ms. DEUGA.



For technical supervision, we had in the commission: Mr. NDJOCK Isaac Oscar and Mrs. MAKEUH Hermione from DAJEC5, and Mr. AKINI MVODO from CMPJ 5.

The work took place under the leadership of Mrs. Florence NDJOKE, District Delegate for Youth and Civic Education.

NUMBER OF STUDENTS AFFECTED

PLACE		GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL
DOUALA 5				
Akwa North High School		96	76	172
Makèpè High School		65	60	125
Sic City High School		67	40	107
College of the Sun		78	58	136
Jean Paul 2 French-speaking College		70	64	154
Jean Paul 2 English-speaking College		65	53	118
Canaries College		113	97	210
University Institute of the Logbessou Coast		100	55	155
DOUALA 3				
Perfection College		300	240	540
TOTAL		954	763	1717





INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S RIGHTS DAY

The theme of the 39th edition was: "Investing in women, accelerating the pace"

Several activities marked the celebration of this day of struggle for women's rights. It all started with the preparatory meetings organized at the level of the regional delegation of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family.

- ❖ The regional launch of activities took place on Tuesday, February 27 at 1 p.m. in the multipurpose room of the governor's services and chaired by the latter;
- ❖ On February 29, a round table was organized at the municipal circle of BONANJO, from 9 a.m., on the theme "how to invest in favor of women and girls"
- ❖ On March 3, the MINPROFF Regional Delegation organized a march which saw the participation of more than 1,000 women from all walks of life: civil society, decentralized state services, private and parastatal companies, hospitals, etc.
- ❖ On March 5, the MINPROFF Delegation organized a capacity building workshop for gender focal points on accelerating the promotion of gender and protecting the rights of women and girls in the face of emerging social scourges in the Littoral (feminicides, GBV, social networks and drug use).
- ❖ All these activities were closed by the grand parade of March 8 at BESSEKE Square and chaired by the Governor of the Littoral Region. This ceremony was marked by the rewards awarded to women who stood out through their social, professional, military and other activities.

Activities carried out by AFE:

- The AFE President acted as a TRAINER during the workshop on capacity building at the municipal circle on March 5. She trained on the theme "Promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls in the face of femicide, GBV and social networks".
- On March 8, she chaired the educational talk on "the long march of women's rights, and on feminist movements" in the presence of all the staff of the United Nations system (HCR, UNFPA, IOM, WHO, etc. at the Naval Base, with around 50 people, with the head of UNFPA, the representative of the protection cluster, the Haoussa Queen as well as a representative of internally displaced persons.



All these events took place under the good auspices of the Regional Delegate of MINPROFF, assisted by the representative of UNFPA.



WORLD MALARIA DAY

As every year, the Women and Children Association joined the Cameroon malaria control program, the Civil Society For Malaria Elimination (CS4ME) of which it is a member to raise awareness among the population on the fight against malaria.

The theme of the awareness raising as developed by the Ministry of Health of Cameroon was: "Accelerating the fight against malaria for a more equitable world"

The first step of our work was to design and print the malaria image boxes. Thus, 15 images were designed for awareness raising.

The awareness-raising work was made possible thanks to the agreement of the heads of establishments, the President of RAFAMA (Network of women's associations of the Manjo subdivision), the Head of the Manjo Health District, Doctor NZEME NZOGA Marie Michèle and two partner associations which are WANET and PBA.

During the awareness raising in the Manjo District, the head of the Health District took the trouble to raise awareness on the CSU.

Difficulties :

- Some of our images were chosen by school officials who felt they spoke more to children: isn't a picture worth a thousand words?
- Not all children sleep under mosquito nets, either because they irritate or suffocate them, or because there are none (because parents receive them during campaigns and do not replace them if they deteriorate), or because they have become unusable through mending. But it must be recognized that in the Manjo District, mothers said that the last wave of mosquito nets distributed to the population was not used because these nets caused allergies, and some were very short;
- In women's associations, some have asked questions about what free healthcare for children from 0 to 5 years old and for pregnant women really means. They have asked to be seriously informed on the issue, because their children have never been treated for free;
- Finally, our presence on the ground leads beneficiaries to ask us for medicines and impregnated mosquito nets. What should we do?





Number of students and parents met.

GROUPS	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL
ENGLISH AND FRENCH PRIMARY SCHOOL			
SCHOOL GROUP THE DIFFERENCE	180	167	347
FRENCH AND ENGLISH SPEAKING NURSERY SCHOOL			
SCHOOL GROUP THE DIFFERENCE	38	37	75
BONAMATOUMBE ENGLISH AND FRENCH SPEAKING NURSERY SCHOOL			
BONAMATOUMBE BONABERI PUBLIC SCHOOL	53	98	151
NURSERY SCHOOLS IN THE MANJO DISTRICT			
MANJO ENGLISH PUBLIC SCHOOL	46	118	164
FRENCH-SPEAKING PUBLIC SCHOOL	85	50	135
AWARENESS RAISING AMONG WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS			
MEETING WITH INTERNALLY DISPLACED WOMEN	50	0	50
BAHAM WOMEN	31	02	33
BAMENA WOMEN	37	05	41
TOTAL	520	477	997





MOTHER'S DAY CELEBRATION WITH SWEETMUMMY PARTY on MAY 26

The day was organized by several associations under the theme: "consequences of domestic violence in families".

The AFE president spoke to the women present about the education of children for an equal future and especially through awareness-raising on positive masculinity and unwanted pregnancies in the family environment which are mainly the cause of clandestine abortions.



MENSTRUAL HYGIENE DAY: MAY 28

In Cameroon, girl students often have difficulty managing their menstrual period. They face practical, social, economic and cultural problems. Several difficulties are encountered in the management of menstrual hygiene.

Menstrual Hygiene Day is celebrated on May 28 every year. Menstruation is taboo, and the young girl, out of ignorance, accepts everything that is told to her and sometimes unscientific and uncorrect information.

This year the day was celebrated with pomp among 50 internally displaced girls in the Littoral region but in an informal manner.

Results :

- 50 internally displaced girls met individually
- 50 dignity kits distributed



DAY OF THE AFRICAN CHILD: JUNE 16

The 34th edition of the celebration of the day of the African child was held in NKONGSAMBA, in collaboration with the head of the 1st Arrondissement social center.

Theme: "Education for all children in Africa: the time has come"



- A round table on inclusive education
- An awareness walk
- Presentations and discussions
 - capacity building of around 10 association leaders on Protection against sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA) at the headquarters of the Women and Children Association;
 - Educational talk with mentally handicapped children at the Soleil Levant home and their parents. 20 parents affected. (DOUALA)





INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL: OCTOBER 11

Objective:

The objective of this day, which is already in its 13th edition, aims to raise public awareness about the problems faced by young girls, to identify the obstacles that prevent their development, in order to help them develop their potential; likewise, it highlights the importance and responsibility of young girls. The theme of this year 2024 focused on "the vision of girls for the future"

What is the benefit of educating the girl child? What are the benefits to her, society? The community and the nation as a whole?

This theme expresses both the need for urgent action and a hope that persists, carried by the power of girls' voices and their vision for the future.

Today's generation of girls is disproportionately affected by global crises related to climate, conflict, poverty and the rollback of hard-won gains in human rights and gender equality. Too many girls are still denied their rights, limiting their choices and their futures.

Yet recent analysis shows that girls are not only courageous in the face of crisis, but also full of hope for the future. Every day, they are taking action to realize the vision of a world in which all girls are protected, respected and empowered.

But girls cannot achieve this vision alone. They need allies who listen to them and respond to their needs. One of their needs that we know is the fight against the misuse of social networks, good information on their sexual and reproductive health, the fight against unwanted pregnancies and clandestine abortions: all these needs are reasons that can prevent the young girl from reaching her full potential.

As activities carried out in the Littoral:

- Educational talk at Akwa Nord high school on sexual rights and reproductive health;
- The same educational talk at the Parish of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Bonamoussadi;
- The third talk given at the College of Laureates on reproductive health and the consequences of clandestine abortions.
- A series of activities were also carried out in the South-West Region, Lebialem Department, Alu District, where young girls are seriously disadvantaged and where it is noted that even at school some 14-year-old girls are already mothers.



Results:

PLACE	GIRLS	BOYS	TOTAL
COASTAL REGION DOUALA DISTRICT 5			
Akwa North High School	80	20	100
Parish of Our Lady of the Annunciation	75	35	110
College of Laureates	90	40	130
Manjo High School	50	00	50
CNJC EDEA 1st	68	00	
Subtotal 1	363	95	390

SOUTH WEST REGION, LEBIALEM DEPARTMENT, ALU DISTRICT, LOCALITY OF MBELENKA

Mbelenka	96	0	96
Total	459	95	554

- 459 girls present and 95 boys;
- 500 leaflets produced and distributed on the rights of young girls in French and English;
- 500 leaflets produced and distributed on sexual and reproductive rights inspired by human rights in French and English



College of Laureates: International Day of the Girl Child 2024



ENGAGEMENT MEETING OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN: JULY 16, 2024: AFE/HORIZONS FEMMES PARTNERSHIP.

As part of the security sector, a meeting of stakeholders was held today, starting at 11:30 a.m. in the premises of Horizons Femmes Littoral, with the 3rd degree neighborhood chiefs of Douala 3rd and 2nd, health centers and partner associations.

The following district heads were present at this meeting:

- Song Mahop, Madagascar 2, Brazaville, Soboum, Bilongue 1, New town airport 1, 2,3, Boko center, city bank 1, Lombe mission of Ndogpassi, Diboum 3, ndogpassi beach
- Beni Health Center
- A Lawyer
- The president of the women and children association
- the NECC represented by the Social Service Officer;
- The antenna manager; The Focal Points of the CHILL and CoSMO Projects;
- The Project Coordinator; The Case Management Coordinator.

This meeting with the main objective of presenting the CoSMO project and the actions on the prevention and management of violence against children.



Horizons Women Douala 3 Headquarters



WORLD RURAL WOMEN'S DAY: October 15, 29th edition

The Women and Children Association joined the Network of Women's Associations of the Manjo District for the celebration under the theme: "Rural women and import-substitution: Opportunities and Challenges."



The purpose of the celebration: "to bring women living in rural areas to contribute more to the government's import-substitution policy."

This edition aims at encouraging a greater contribution from the populations targeting rural areas and in particular women to the import-substitution policy. It helps reduce the country's dependence on imports by promoting local production. This policy implemented within the framework of the National Development Strategy (2020-2030), encourages local processing of agricultural and industrial products, a quality and quantity processing. It also recommends the consumption of local products by Cameroonians.

Statistics reveal that women in rural areas represent 71.6% of the formal and informal agricultural workforce (EESI2), and they produce more than 85% of food consumption (ECAM4). As key players in the country's food security, rural women continue to face many challenges that hamper their activities and weaken their



living conditions. These include difficult access to production resources (land, financing, production tools, etc.) and environmental constraints.

Activities carried out:

- Educational talks on climate change, how to adopt new farming practices and adapt to these changes by the delegate of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development;
- Educational talk on family planning and clandestine abortion with internally displaced women and MANJO host communities;
- Participation in the launch of the day at EBONE for the Littoral Region (see photos)

Results achieved:

- 100 women participate in educational talks at MANJO,
- 50 women participate in the launch and present some processed agricultural products such as cocoa butter.





16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS, from November 25 to December 10

This year, the theme for reflection was: "Fighting back and rebuilding after violence".

The fight against violence against women and girls, beyond being defined as political issues, has gradually gained an important place in the human rights and humanitarian action agenda.

It is in terms of a pandemic that this violence is now understood, because it remains the most widespread and common violation (UN, 2023), generating millions of victims in a visible and invisible way. These victims are subjected on a daily basis to more insidious brutalities, which affect them regardless of their age, economic status, and level of education or social origin, while influencing their physical integrity.



The 16 days allowed women to talk about tolerance "O" in the face of femicide. This term refers to the murder of a woman or girl because of her sex. It is an extreme form of gender-based violence, rooted in hatred of the female gender, male domination and gender inequality.

Objective: Strengthening mechanisms to combat violence against women and girls

Activities carried out:

- Panelist at the conference organized by UNFPA and MINPROFF
- Organization of a workshop with the women of Douala 2
- Participation in the meeting on STOP FEMINICIDE on December 6 at the DAPROFF Littoral room on collaborative advocacy for the fight against femicides with the theme: "all united against femicides in Cameroon".

Results obtained:

- AFE participated in the conference and presented the following theme: "Progress made and persistent challenges in gender equality and the fight against GBV since the BEIJING conference in 1995", at the meeting room of the MINPROFF Regional Delegation in front of approximately 100 women and association leaders;
- Awareness-raising in two women's associations (Les Amazones de l'Ouest and les femmes étoiles) on what constitutes violence against women and girls: 60 women affected;



- Facilitation of a workshop on what VFF are and the difference with VBG, at the New-Bell girl's house: 60 women representing the different associations of the DOUALA 2 district
- Design and dissemination of a leaflet on GBV.



Family photos on the occasion of the collaborative advocacy



AIDS MONTH

OBJECTIVE

In Cameroon, the month of December is dedicated to raising awareness and fighting against HIV/AIDS. This year marks the 9th edition of Cameroon AIDS Month, and the 37th edition of the day of the fight against HIV/AIDS. A particular emphasis was placed this year on drug addiction and licit and illicit drugs in schools, just like last year, and our slogan was: "let's follow the path of law". We also focused this awareness on GBV and HIV.

Indeed, women and girls who experience gender-based violence are more exposed to the risk of contracting HIV and especially of being victims of sexual violence. Young girls and women are not always able to negotiate the use of a condom, and do not know how to practice sex without risk, by correctly using a condom, whether female or male. Few women have ever seen a female condom. In addition, it costs more and is not at all accessible. Through this awareness, it is a question of remembering that the female and male condoms are not worn together. It is one or the other. The best condom is the one that comes out of our bag, because each person can guarantee its authenticity and reliability, depending on where it was purchased and especially be sure that it has not been pierced by a malicious partner. Everything must be taken into account while using a condom: the date of manufacture and expiry, lubrication, correct use, etc.

Demonstrations of the use of female and male condoms have been carried out by us both in markets and in higher education institutions where we no longer advocate abstinence as in secondary schools, because that would be wishful thinking.

Whether in high schools, colleges, families, communities, couples and other intimate partners, gender-based violence exacerbates women's vulnerability due to stigma, discrimination and marginalization.

Our HIV prevention programs always take into account GBV and offer support services to women and girl survivors of violence.

Efforts to prevent GBV, sexual violence and HIV must be integrated and include approaches such as education, awareness raising, sexual and reproductive health services, and social support programmes.





Preparation of the activity

- Production of 40,000 PINS;
- Production of 300 posters to combat HIV/AIDS;
- Production of explanatory leaflets on HIV for mass awareness;
- Received from a large batch of material from SYNERGIES AFRICAINES.

Capacity building activities conducted during HIV/AIDS awareness month

- Capacity building of 10 social workers in the Nkongsamba 1st Subdivision;
- Capacity building of 100 Reproductive Health Ambassadors (50 at MANJO and 50 at EDEA)
- Capacity building of DAJEC 5 staff in HIV/AIDS and presentation of the benefits of ARV treatment;
- Strengthening the capacities of DAJECs of EDEA 1 and 2);
- Sticking up posters in all the establishments and in the cities we visited: Douala 1, 3, 4 and 5; MANJO, NKONGSAMBA 1st, EDEA 1 and 2;
- HIV presentation conference in front of TRADEX management staff;

Results

Awareness raising activities carried out	Number of pins distributed	Number of people indirectly affected	Number of condoms	Number of knits	Number of posters
SANAGA MARITIME DEPARTMENT					
EDEA 1	5200	8,000	200	02	20
EDEA 2	1500	3000	0	00	10
Subtotal 1	6700	11,000	200	02	30
WOURI DEPARTMENT					
DOUALA 1ST DISTRICT					
DOUALA 1 (NEW BELL Prison and Multifunctional Youth Promotion Center)	1000	1000	00	00	10
PATOU LOVE SCHOOL	300	400	00	00	00
TRADEX COMPANY	100	150	00	00	04
Subtotal 2	1400	1550	00	00	44
DOUALA DISTRICT 3					
ZENITH COLLEGE	2000	4000	00	00	20
COLLEGE OF PERFECTION	1500	3000	00	00	10
Catholic Parish of PK8	500	3000	00	00	05
Subtotal 3	4000	10,000	00	00	35
DOUALA DISTRICT 4					
HIPE BIOMEDICAL ASSOCIATION	500	1000	00	00	08
Subtotal 4	500	1000	00	00	08
DOUALA DISTRICT 5					
PK14 and IUC market, GENDARMERIE and POLICE, Douala Bassa Technical High School	700	1500	921	03	10
Bonamoussadi High School	1000	4000	00	00	10
13 school, extracurricular and university structures	4000	8000			100



Subtotal 5	5700	13,500	921	00	120
MOUNGO DEPARTMENT					
MANJO (MANJO High School, CMPJ, SAR/SM, MANENGOUBA College, Kindergarten group 2	4000	8,000	100	00	30
NKONGSAMBA 1st (Inclusive public school, internally displaced persons, Bororo populations and children in distress from the evangelical center	1000	5000	00	00	20
Subtotal 6	6000	13,000	100	00	20
SOUTH WEST REGION LEBIALEM DEPARTMENT					
LEBIALEM	2000	4000	300	00	20
Subtotal 7	2000	4000	300	00	00
AWARENESS RAISING WOMEN AND CHILDREN ASSOCIATION IN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATIONS, OTHER SCHOOLS IN MOUNGO AND WOURI					
Subtotal 8	7,000	10,000	500	00	20
TOTAL	32,300	64,050	1821	05	287

Activity partners

- GLOBAL FUND FOR WOMEN
- AFRICAN SYNERGIES
- DAJEC of DOUALA 1, 3, and 5
- DAJEC EDEA 1 and 2
- RAFAMA
- Social Service of NKONGSAMBA 1st
- LEBIALEM
- YOUTH HOUSE

FROM BEPANDA OMNISPORT

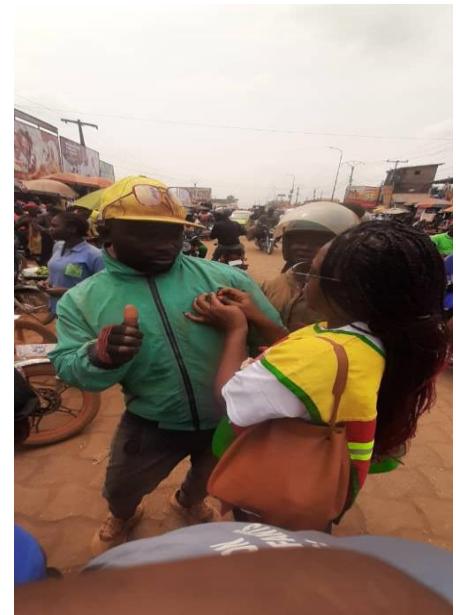
Preparation for the activity

DAJEC 5





**DAJEC 5/AFE partnership at IUC
Together we are stronger**



Raise awareness wherever needed

Raising awareness among "benskinneurs" (motorcycle drivers) about the PK 14 market.



OTHER TRAINING ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

Fondation Keywords 4 Success Magazine **Projet national brisons les tabous**

RENCONTRE LITTERAIRE **UNE HISTOIRE TABOUE**

Madame Pauline Matchim Juriste, formatrice et consultante.

C'est avec un sentiment de satisfaction que nous tenons à vous remercier pour votre participation à la rencontre littéraire qui s'est tenue samedi 21 juillet 2024 à la bibliothèque Djaiili Amadou Amal à Ndogpassi 1 dans l'arrondissement de Douala 3ème.

Cet événement a connu le succès souhaité par notre fondation et nous vous adressons notre gratitude. L'objectif de cette rencontre était de présenter notre ouvrage intitulé UNE HISTOIRE TABOUE qui met en évidence les violences auxquelles font face les jeunes et les femmes. Nous avons trouvé durant ce café littéraire, votre contribution très enrichissante qui a permis le succès de l'événement dans l'ensemble.

Nous vous en remercions infiniment.



- Project les « pepites du CAMEROUN »

As part of the partnership with the Cameroon Pépites Project, which has the general objective of supporting the social and professional integration of disadvantaged women, particularly people with disabilities, AFE and COFEPRE have intervened to strengthen the capacities of sports instructors for the socio-economic support of these women through sport. The capacities of the 25 supervisors have been strengthened in: Environmental study, Sexual Law and Reproductive Health, Resilience to support disadvantaged populations, Protection against exploitation and sexual abuse.

Two meetings were organized for this purpose, in Yaoundé (October 21-23) and Douala (September 25-28).

The PEAS training is based on SDG 16.2 on combating the protection and exploitation of child sexual abuse, and 16.3 on combating impunity for



predators responsible for child rape. At the end, participants signed the COFEPRE PEAS policy, anything that would facilitate prosecutions in the event of abuse of these vulnerable young women.

- Citizen Initiative Project for Inclusive Elections in Cameroon

Association Femmes et Enfants also intervened in the Citizen Initiative Project for Inclusive Elections in Cameroon. This project initiated by ANAJEHCAM promotes the political and civic participation of people with disabilities in the Littoral Region. For a better understanding of their roles within society, AFE intervened to challenge them in more ways than one. For us, it is about giving them a moral rearmament, so that they do not see themselves as separate citizens. They should have a conquering attitude because nothing is easily obtained. Disability makes them vulnerable, to the point where people with disabilities are not counted in decision-making bodies, especially women. AFE was concerned with returning to the many ills of which women are victims and boosting morale for a better change in mentality and behavior in the face of adversity. The themes discussed during the four days (2 in Nkongsamba on December 6 and 7 and 2 in Douala on December 27 and 28) focused in turn on the resilience of disabled women, the fight against GBV and VAW. It was mainly and with specific examples to get to the heart of the subject on violence with details on its deep meaning, what it is and what it is not.

Partnership with the National Association of Young Disabled People of Cameroon (ANAJEHCAM)



Becoming aware of GBV in all our living environments



FORMATION OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AMBASSADORS IN THE DISTRICT OF MANJO (DEPARTMENT OF MOUNGO) AND THE DISTRICT OF EDEA1 (DEPARTMENT OF SANAGA MARITIME)

As part of its activities, AFE has strengthened the capacities of 100 young girls as ambassadors of reproductive health, namely (50 in the MANJO district, and 50 in the EDEA 1st district).

It is actually about giving arguments to the young ambassadors to be message bearers, with their peers. The training continues and will end in May 2025.



EDEA AMBASSADORS



MANJO Ambassadors



RELATION WITH INSTITUTIONS

Financial partner: GLOBAL FUND FOR WOMEN: signing of the three-year partnership contract, participation in the two webinars organized by the focal points and beneficiaries in 2024;

GFW represented by the Wake up ladies Cameroon Association organized two meetings during the year which has just ended.

The first was held from April 3 to 4 in LIMBE with the objective of creating a framework for exchange, mutual learning, sharing of experiences and networking between old and new beneficiaries of Global Fund for Women in Cameroon.

The second in DOUALA on August 28 and 29, 2024 at the place called CITIZEN HOTEL, aimed to strengthen the capacities of 04 organizations on the themes of governance, monitoring and evaluation, feminism, communication, and to create a framework for exchanges conducive to learning, networking and mutual sharing.



Two participants in the training of Global Fund for Women at Citizen Hotel

NATIONAL CIVIL STATUS REGISTRATION OFFICE

As part of its numerous activities in the field, AFE conducted educational talks on civil status facts with the internally displaced women of Manjo, as a recommendation from this office. Internally displaced populations who suffer from a lack of documents have carefully listened to the importance of administrative documents which make them citizens, but access to these documents still remains a difficulty, due to the impossibility of redoing them, due to the security crisis which persists in the different regions of origin. To this end, the Mayor of the town also asked us, with our partner RAFAMA, to encourage them to register with her services for collective weddings. Indeed, most of them, if not all, live in precarious situations, known by the popular saying "come, we stay" to speak of notorious cohabitation, a situation which does not provide them with any rights. The ladies present asked us to talk about it with their husbands but we were unable to mobilize them, and we hope that this will be done soon.

Results:

- 60 women participated in this educational talk in the premises of the party house, located opposite the former sub-prefecture of Manjo;
- 200 leaflets on the importance of civil status documents in French and English distributed to the population for better awareness.



UNFPA

From the work done with UNFPA in the Littoral region, AFE retains the capacity building and training activities on various themes: the "Gender Based Violence Management System, safe spaces and its characteristics, case management etc., regular monthly meetings, preparation meetings for the highlights (March 8), with a conference organized around the theme and a march organized in partnership with DR/MINPROFF/LT.

Multiple collaborations and technical input by the UNFPA representative in the Littoral with a view to organizing the menstrual hygiene day (May 28);

Organization of a launch conference for the 16 Days of Activism against Violence against Women and Girls with the theme: "Progress made and persistent challenges in gender equality and the fight against GBV" on November 26, at the DR/MINPROFF meeting room. We thank the representative for her effective presence on the ground, her support and above all her availability, because she remains accessible at all times.

CLUSTER PROTECTION

This is the coordination system that operates at the global level. This cluster allows us to optimize our capacities to avoid duplication of activities. The cluster manages information in the field of protection of IDPs and vulnerable people in general in the North-West, West, Littoral and South-West Cameroon. Several meetings were held this year at UNHCR headquarters with useful information. On August 22, a training workshop on Mainstreaming Protection was held. The objective was to define protection, and to tell the participants why it is necessary to ensure mainstreaming protection, the key elements of mainstreaming protection, mainstreaming protection in practice, etc. At the end, the participants received certificates signed by the head of the protection sector for the littoral, and the UNHCR representative.

UNHCR

On November 21, a meeting was held in LOGBESSOU with refugee parents and children living in the Douala 5 district. The Association Femmes et Enfants and the DAJEC 5 participated in this meeting and gave an educational talk on clandestine abortion, family planning, STIs/HIV/AIDS. The DAJEC 5 raised awareness on moral rearment.

60 women, children and men were present at this meeting.



OVERVIEW OF SEMINARS AND WEBINARS

AFE PARTICIPATION IN ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT BY COLLABORATORS AND OTHER PARTNERS

ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS	DATE AND PLACE	THEME GOALS
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS and ACCAT LITTORAL	09 January Star Land Hotel BONAPRISO	Encourage and support the prevention of torture in Cameroon through international law
COOPCA SEED OF SENEVA	January 30. SKY BONAPRISO Hotel	AG Improve the economic and social living conditions of members
CS4ME MEETING	Online	How to eliminate malaria
5th COASTAL CSO Forum	13/02 Hotel Valley of the Princes BESSENGUE	Citizen participation in public action in the era of decentralization: what perspective for Civil Society?
SOUTH FEMINIST FUTURE	February 21 online	Preparation of the MANIFESTO
DR/MINPROFF LAUNCH OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS DAY	February 27, Governor Littoral services	Presentation of activities to be carried out in the Region
FRENCH INSTITUTE	March 7 at the Akwa Palace Hotel	WOMEN OVERFIFTY concept fashion show
APDL	MARCH 14 FRENCH INSTITUTE	Panel discussion as part of the days of empowerment and employment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rethinking partnerships for the empowerment of Cameroonian women - Sharing success stories from 05 inspiring leaders
VBG/DR/MINPROFF SUBGROUP	UNHCR	Evaluation of the activities of the day of struggle for women's rights Sharing the work plan for 2024 Referral Pathway Review
FACE/ADAPTION PROGRAM	Online meeting on March 21	Support for CSOs: Gender and Climate Issues Impacts of climate change on women
MINISTRY OF YOUTH AND CIVIC EDUCATION	Happy childhood BONANJO March 22	Regional workshop for the appropriation of the NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR POPULAR EDUCATION (CONEP)
REACH OUT ...	June 19, 2024 at the esplanade of the National Museum	Peace Paintings: Promoting Women, Peace and Security through a culture of peace and social cohesion in Cameroon
DOUALA 3RD TOWN HALL	July 31, 2024 African Women's Day at DOUALA City Hall 3	Pan-African Women's Day: findings: poor access to resources, cultural constraints, not listened to in decision-making, forced marriages, inheritance, widowhood rites, etc.
THURANUS INSTITUTE	October 5 in Makepe next to the Parish of Saint Monica	Conference on the Women's School



SCHOOL OF SPORTS PROFESSIONS	October 19 at the conference room; INJS YAOUNDE	CO PANELIST with COFEPRE at the Conference on the social issues of practicing physical and sporting activities
ODAS Center	November 25 online	Webinar on gynecological violence
REJEFEMAC (Network of Young Feminists of Central Africa) /ARFAC (Association for Feminist Research in Central Africa)	November 29, 2025 at the headquarters of "ELLES RAYONNENT ENSEMBLE"	Reflection workshop for improving the management and monitoring of VFF cases in Douala and focus group on the feminist financing ecosystem in Central Africa.

In addition, online training meetings were regularly organized by partner stakeholders, including:

- CS4ME (several meetings via ZOOM)
- PLAFOSCIL: Around 25 online meetings spread throughout the year
- IAS (International Aids Society) training meetings
- Series of training courses organized by the WOMEN, PEACE, SECURITY and HUMANITARIAN ACTION pact
- Online training meetings on feminism with SOUTH FEMINIST FUTURES;

AFE IN THE MEDIA

Our messages and advocacy also extend to the media, which constitute a significant force in our action.

AFE would benefit from training journalists and other presenters who accompany them in the field in order to properly relay the right information to their listeners and viewers, especially in matters of Sexual Rights and Reproductive Health, clandestine abortions, Gender-Based Violence, etc.

Knowing and observing that there is a vast need for information among the populations, we do not hesitate to respond to the call of local television and radio stations, or even online channels.

Following the restitution workshop of the study on contraceptive and abortion practices in Douala, Integral radio vision produced an extract of the event; you can follow it via this link

<https://web.whatsapp.com/https://www.facebook.com/IntegralRadioVision/videos/928994365332712/?app=fbl>

Equinoxe television also talked about it on the 8 p.m. news on February 5, 2024. The link is: <https://www.youtube.com/live/PPV4iui0Nys?si=62BcIF1DDSVu2bVg>



THE ACHIEVEMENT

AFE President was nominated for the Africa Women's Awards as a Laureate in the category of Female Artist of Impact in the Fight Against Violence Against Women and Children.



Award reception at the Palais de Yaoundé Congress (April 2024)

MEMBRE OF CIVIL SOCIETY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF MALARIA

It is a global network of civil society and community organizations contributing to malaria elimination and ensuring that communities are at the center of malaria control programs. As a member of AFE, it remains more committed than ever to advocating for effective, sustainable, people-centered, rights-based, equitable and inclusive malaria control programs.





RECOGNITION PARTNERS' ANNOUNCEMENTS

We believe in solidarity and networking; over the years, AFE has gained popularity among government institutions, religious institutions, media, sister organizations and UN agencies. AFE wishes to express its gratitude and appreciation to all its partners who have contributed to helping it achieve its goal of informing, educating and supporting women and children on their rights.

Special thanks go to the supporters and donors whose unwavering support and commitment to our cause has had a major impact that we cannot overemphasize. GLOBAL FUND FOR WOMEN, IOM, SYNERGIES AFRICAINES, UNESCO, CORDAID, GIZ COALITION FOR AFRICAN LESBIAN, URGENT FUND AFRICA and all the benefactors we dare not mention; through their in-kind and cash support, advocacy and capacity building, we have been able to reach our target population whose lives have been transformed.

We are more than grateful for the continuous administrative support we receive from different Ministerial Departments. Our work in the field, especially in the university sector, would not have been possible without the support of MINJEC (DAJEC V) DAJEC EDEA 1 and 2; Youth House of Bépanda Omnisport; working tirelessly on the rights of women and girls in the company of MINPROFF (DAPROFF II, III, IV), the CPPF of Akwa, MINAS (Head of social action of the 9th Arrondissement Commissariat, social action of NKONGSAMBA 1st and the Departmental Delegation of LEBIALEM, RAFAMA, has allowed us to gain recognition and visibility.

Partnering with sister organizations this year is undoubtedly another stepping stone that has allowed us to reach a diverse population, exchange ideas, network and gain new knowledge. We are grateful for their trust and dedication.



DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED

- ⊕ Still waiting to receive funds from the African Union for a project whose grant was awarded since 2019;
- ⊕ Support for services, including training;
- ⊕ Difficulties in stabilizing staff;
- ⊕ Lack of sufficient financial resources for greater efficiency;
- ⊕ The prevalence of prejudices in reproductive health;
- ⊕ Low private sector sensitivity;
- ⊕ Difficulty in publishing and distributing newspapers on the sexuality of young adolescents;
- ⊕ Lack of safe space for GBV survivors in the region;
- ⊕ Difficult to put into practice the management of GBV cases.

OBSERVATION AND NEW CHALLENGES

We have two challenges to face: those related to the socio-cultural and political environment and those related to the functioning of the organization.

Challenges related to the socio-cultural and political context

- **Women's Empowerment** who contribute to the economic survival of their family, community and the growth of the country by performing jobs and activities in undervalued sectors (domestic work, informal economy, etc.). Despite the efforts made, they still remain poor, and are generally deprived of access to assets, credit and any form of social insurance. Their economic empowerment must be promoted by removing all barriers and other traditional and cultural constraints that continue to keep them at the level of inferior beings.

As for rural women: despite all the hard work to feed the populations of big cities, their voices are not always taken into account.

- **Education:** To educate is to free the speech and thought of populations. Education allows the expression of legitimate questions, freedom of thought, respect for personal values and fulfillment in relationships with others. Everyone must be educated. For greater justice, we would gain by giving girls the means to access education and increasing female literacy rates.

Gender discrimination

Women continue to pay a heavy price for being female. Habits die hard, they say, but endurance allows us to be where we were not before 1995, the date of the BEIJING conference, which was quite revolutionary for women around the world. It is time to take stock, almost 30 years after this unprecedented conference; even if things have been done, the place of women in decision-making bodies remains



a mirage. The fight against masculinity **toxic** must also be on the agenda in the fight against gender-based discrimination.

The progress made is numerous:

On the institutional level, with the creation of the Ministry dedicated to women, we had:

- The development of a national gender policy;
- The establishment of gender focal points;
- The creation of shelters for women in distress;
- The establishment of several platforms;
- Implementing gender-responsive budgeting.

From a legislative and regulatory perspective, it is recognized that:

- As a member of the United Nations, Cameroon is a signatory to almost all international frameworks and/or references for the promotion and protection of the rights of women and girls, at the international level, in particular CEDEF, the International Convention to Combat All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, etc.
- At the regional level, there was the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights relating to the rights of women.

At the national level,

- As a major result of these reforms, the adoption of a new Penal Code based on the guidelines of CEDAW.
- Law No. 2016/007 of July 12, 2016, relating to the Penal Code in its articles 277 and following, now punishes excision, article 296 punishes rape, article 356 punishes forced marriage, article 338 punishes any violence against a pregnant woman or even article 355-2 which punishes the obstruction of the right to education to name just a few articles;
- The Electoral Code in its article 151 paragraph 3 specifies that "The constitution of each list of candidates must take into account the different sociological components of the constituency concerned. It must also take into account gender."
- Moreover, the Constitution of Cameroon enshrines the equality of citizens and the sacred character of the human being.
- 26 WOMEN SENATORS OUT OF 100, 60 WOMEN DEPUTIES OUT OF 180, 39 women mayors out of 360, etc.

The challenges remain persistent: the most salient are:

- The production of statistical data disaggregated by gender;
- Insufficient resources for the implementation of the National Gender Policy,



- The National Strategy to Combat GBV and the Action Plan for Resolutions 1325 and Related Resolutions of the United Nations Security Council;
- Implementing gender-responsive budgeting;
- The absence of a specific fund for financing female entrepreneurship.

Other challenges remain:

- The low level of education of women which reduces their access to information allowing them to have a better knowledge of their rights;
- Taking into account foreign languages (English and French) as eligibility criteria to the detriment of local languages, which are nevertheless used and recognized as effective in electoral communication;
- Socio-cultural constraints, prejudices and stereotypes persist. These stereotypes are maintained by both men and women themselves;
- The investiture of political parties is unfavorable to women. Indeed, women cannot reach the finish line if they are not at the start! To be elected, you must first be a candidate;
- The limitations of Law No. 2012/001 of 19 April 2012 on the Electoral Code, which does not guarantee a minimum quota of women on the list of candidates or their positions on this list, thus encouraging corruption and intimidation when drawing up these lists;
- Violence and discrimination against women within political parties and even within the family. This situation creates in them a real feeling of fear and insecurity;
- The high amount of bail fees prevents many women from meeting the eligibility requirements for elections;

On the economic side, we can cite:

- Limited access to finance for women entrepreneurs: despite training and support for women entrepreneurs, access to finance remains a major challenge. The conditions for access to credit remain strict, thus limiting the creation of new businesses;
- Persistent structural inequalities: Gender stereotypes and gender-based violence continue to hamper women's empowerment, particularly in rural areas;
- Cultural resistance and uneven application of laws on gender-based violence remain major obstacles to overcome;
- Insufficient resilience to crises: Although interventions have had a positive impact on vulnerable communities, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed weaknesses in local health systems and social protection mechanisms. The lack of adequate infrastructure and resources in rural areas has hampered rapid response to health and economic crises;

Priorities for women to better meet challenges:

In terms of promoting female leadership, we must:



- Bringing together women leaders, elected women and activists from the various political parties in our country in order to develop strategies to overcome the difficulties they encounter, while preparing them to better tackle future electoral deadlines in Cameroon;
- To emphasize the promotion of positive masculinity with the aim of engaging men and boys in supporting women in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment;

As for the economic empowerment of women:

- It is essential to set up a fund dedicated to female entrepreneurship in order to EFFECTIVELY combat poverty;
- Establish one-stop support points for holistic care of victims/survivors of gender-based violence, with the involvement of all stakeholders;

CHALLENGES RELATED TO AFE WORK

- The functioning of the organization remains mixed due to numerous difficulties linked to financing despite the multiple projects submitted;
- Capacity building of members and youth disinterest in social issues;
- The absence of "safe spaces" for GBV survivors;
- The impunity of the executioners due to the judicial system not accessible to all and the silence that continues to prevail among the victims.
- The resilience work that is not done with many survivors due to a lack of resources on the one hand and on the other hand on the part of parents who do not always understand its importance.

HIGHLIGHTING PERSPECTIVES

- We work in seeking opportunities to strengthen the capacities of members and volunteers to meet new challenges;
- Place emphasis on finding partners who can support our activities over the long term;
- Reflect on the mechanisms of health services sensitive to young people in the Cameroonian context, particularly in terms of sexual and reproductive health;
- Contribute to better integration of sex education into school curricula in Cameroon by organizing a conference on this subject.