

UN WOMEN CAMEROON

July - September 2020



Family picture of the Gender Data Network Journalists training

MESSAGE FROM UN WOMEN CAMEROON REPRESENTATIVE ai



As 2020 unfolds, the Covid 19 pandemic spreads the world and has worsen the situation of millions of persons through out the planet with women and girls paying the highest tribute. Though, 2020 remains an important milestone for gender equality with the celebration of Beijing + 25, of the 20th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 and the 10th anniversary of UN Women.

COVID-19 outbreak and governments measures to curb its spread, has caused major devastation and disruption globally and it resulted in devastating social and economic consequences with unprecedented loss of revenues, particularly for the most vulnerable.

It has exacerbated food insecurity and gender based violence as showed by the recently released Rapid Assessment Survey conducted by UN Women and BUCREP in communities. In Cameroon, up to 80% of women work in the informal sector, which means that they don't benefit from Social Protection, not eligible for bailouts, and did not benefit from the Financial Stimulus Package measures.

UN Women Cameroon Country Office pursued the implementation of its Response Plan tailored to reach the most left behind women and Girls to alleviate the pandemic consequences and to build resilience around the C19 sanitary value chain. Projects have been implemented to foster women economic empowerment, with sister agencies support UNICEF and UNDP. Support have been provided to provide comprehensive services to victims of violence in the Far North with Japan support and peace initiatives have been reinforced all over the country with PBF support in joint programming with sister agencies. Focus have been put to strengthen the statistical system to capture and monitor progress to help decision making.

UN Women Cameroon expresses gratitude to all its partners for their support to build resilience for a “Build Back Better” perspective and to leave no one behind during this pandemic.

UNICEF AND UN WOMEN JOIN EFFORT TO EMPOWER VULNERABLE WOMEN DURING COVID 19 IN CAMEROON

In March 2020, Cameroon government enacted barrier measures including containment. This resulted in negative impacts on the economy and hit the informal sector even harder given it share in the economy around 80% with a concentration of women.

UN Women and UNICEF have launched a joined project for the production of 30,000 masks on June 5, 2020 with the aim of strengthening the capacities of the most vulnerable women and girls in poor districts of the city of Yaounde. Almost 20 women were equipped with sewing machines and trained in swing technics to produce 50 barrier masks per day for a daily amount of 5,000 francs.



Model of mask to be mounted by seamstresses. Photo credit: UN Women

NSA ONDO Catherine is a 32-year-old woman, mother of two little boys and living in the Odza district. Covid 19 has had an impact on her activity, the main source of income for her household. This project arrived like a lifeline. "Initially, it was difficult for me to put together 50 pieces a day. First of all, I had to find the technique to make my job easier. But I've already managed to meet the daily quota. On Thursday evening, I already count the parts I've assembled during the week and I have an idea of how much I get paid per week. In this time of crisis, any financial input can only allow me to manage my small family. I cannot thank enough the initiators of the project and the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family, which has identified me to be part of the project and to contribute in my own way to the fight against the spread of the virus. »



Cathy in her workshop. Photo credit: UN Women

Like Catherine, the other seamstresses in the project share the same difficulties. The present project contributes to the revival of their economic activity. After 30 days and for a production of 1500 masks per seamstresses, the total sum will have saved more than one life.

UN Women Cameroon has developed a response plan towards women and girls including reducing the economic impact on the poorest women and girls. This joined project with UNICEF is part of the Response Plan.

UN WOMEN SUPPORTS THE TRAINING OF JOURNALISTS AND STATISTICIANS / DEMOGRAPHERS ON GENDER DATA VISUALIZATION TECHNIQUES AND PRODUCTION OF STATISTICAL INSERTS ON GENDER



Interview with Mr Emmanuel Batake-Coordinator of the Gender Data Journalists Network, Photo credit: Nelly Kamdem-UN Women Cameroon

On July 07-08, 2020, a workshop was held in the Omnisports district of Yaoundé to build the capacity of journalists and statisticians/demographers on gender data visualization techniques and production and dissemination of statistical inserts on gender data. It was a joint initiative of the Gender Data Journalists Network, the Central Bureau of Censuses and Population Studies (BUCREP) with the technical and financial support of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) under the Women Count project.

The series, which is only in its first session, had the following objectives:

- Bring the participants to master the tools for dissemination of gender data,
- Strengthen and encourage dialogue between media (data users) and data producers on gender data;
- Initiate and encourage journalists to integrate statistical inserts on disaggregated and gender data in their daily work with appropriate data visualization techniques,
- Provide participants with good practices in popularizing statistical data on gender and the SDGs.

At the end of the modules presented by the resource persons of the organizing structures, the thirty participants were educated on the concepts of statistical inserts, as well as techniques for manipulating data on gender and the SDGs. They also committed to integrating the use of disaggregated data in order to make it visible in their daily work thanks to data visualization techniques.



Family picture, Photo credit : Nelly Kamdem-UN Women Cameroon

Ms. Hind Jalal, Representative ai of UN Women Cameroon highlighted in her opening remarks that this activity is a suitable opportunity to strengthen the dialogue between producers and users of data in order to reduce the difficulties of access to gender data, and by the same opportunity to considerably improve the use of appropriate illustrations in the various reports, and mastery of statistical and scientific language.

She concluded that “the global crisis triggered by the Covid 9 pandemic is deepening fast, leaving researchers and policymakers scrambling to collect and analyze data to assess its impact on affected countries and population. This urgent health crisis will have massive global social and economic impacts that will reverberate for years to come. The immediate need for gender data cannot be overemphasized

UNWOMEN AND UNDP SUPPORT VULNERABLE WOMEN IN SOUTH WEST AND NORTH WEST REGIONS

Bamenda 16 July 2020. 21 participants took part in the official launch of the project: “Support for women's socio-economic activities around the value chains induced by COVID19 in the North-West and South-West Regions of Cameroon”, initiated jointly by UN-Women and UNDP, in the conference room of the Regional Research Delegation of the North-West region in Bamenda.

The main objective was to equip the participants with the necessary skills on how to manage income-generating activities and protection from COVID 19 contamination, namely, the production of standardized reusable fabric barrier masks in accordance with existing standards, and the production of antiseptic soaps and hydro-alcoholic gels.



Family picture of workshop participants/UNwomen

During this activity, the participants were sensitized on the situation of covid 19 in Africa and in Cameroon, on the socio-economic consequences on women and girls in particular, as well as on the main barrier measures put in place. They were also trained on entrepreneurship and simplified business management.

At the end of the activity, participants expressed their satisfaction with the newly acquired skills. According to Mrs. **Boja MANKA**, one of the beneficiaries, "my dreams are coming true since I now have the necessary knowledge to plan and budget my activities."

Watch the video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6chMFLl8r78&feature=youtu.be>

The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has limited the progress made in recent decades, which is likely to be reduced. In all areas, from health to the economy, from security to social protection, the effects of COVID-19 are exacerbated for women and girls. This project initiated by UN Women with UNDP support is a rapid and targeted response aimed at mitigating the gender impact

of the crisis on the most vulnerable and ensuring that they benefit from long-term recovery measures, especially economic recovery.

UN WOMEN AND UNICEF DONATE 30,000 WASHABLE MASKS TO VULNERABLE WOMEN THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT AND THE FAMILY

On July 23rd, 2020 in the conference room of the Ministry of Women Empowerment and the Family, a ceremony was organized to officially donate 30,000 reusable barrier masks. The ceremony was chaired by the Minister of Women Empowerment and the Family, in the presence of Mr. Jacques Boyer, Representative of Unicef and Mrs. Hind Jalal, Representative of UN Women Cameroon.



This 30 000 reusable masks donation is the outcome of a UNICEF UN Women joint program implemented to reduce the impact of COVID on most vulnerable women and girls.

For Jacques Boyer, UNICEF remained mobilized and committed to support the government of Cameroon to strengthen the resilience of children to face COVID 19 crisis. This is why “the agency, together with UN Women, launched this project, which aims not only to manufacture masks but also

to provide economic support to the most vulnerable women”

For Hind JALAL, the Representative of UN Women Cameroon, "Given the negative impact of COVID 19 on the economy, particularly, on the informal sector, a sector where women work the most, UN Women partnered with UNICEF and the Ministry to kick off this project".

Speaking to the Medias, the Minister Mrs Abena Ondoa née Obama Marie Thérèse noted that protecting the most vulnerable women means first and foremost protecting families, the community and the nation as a whole. The project allowed to capacitate women seamstresses and could lead to vocations in mask making. The most vulnerable women are a particular target that we need to support on a daily basis”

Launched on June 5, 2020 and piloted by the association KmerPad, the project aimed not only to support seamstresses recruited in the working class neighborhoods of Yaounde but also to facilitate access to protective masks for the most vulnerable. The distribution of these barrier masks in all women's networks in Cameroon will be ensured by the Ministry, through its various centers for the promotion of women and the family.

THE CAMEROON INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE ON GENDER STATISTICS ORGANIZED ITS FIRST SESSION OF THE YEAR

The 2020 first session of the Inter-ministerial Committee on Gender Statistics in Cameroon was organized at Hôtel Azur in Yaoundé, on July 30th 2020, to update its members on the implementation of the Making Every Woman and Girl Count Project during the year 2020. The Meeting was chaired by the Secretary General of the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Family and Co-Chaired by the Director General of the National Institute of Statistics. The Inter-ministerial Committee provides its members with strategic orientations to improve the production and use of gender statistics for a better monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals and the National Gender Policy.

The Committee was established within the "Women Count" Program, a Flagship Global Program, funded by UN Women and implemented since 2017 in 12 countries. It is currently implemented in Cameroon, in partnership with MINPROFF, INS, BUCREP, and several other entities with the overall objective of making gender statistical data available, accessible, analyzed and used, to inform policies, advocacy and accountability to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.



The activity banner. Photo credit: Nelly Kamdem-UN Women Cameroon.

The working session began with the address of Mr. Moussa AOUDOU, Secretary General of the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and the Family (MINPROFF) and Chairman of the Committee, in the presence of Mr. Joseph TEDOU, Director General of the National Institute of Statistics and Vice-Chairman of the Committee. In his speech, he recognized the importance of the Women Count project in improving the availability and the use of gender statistics in Cameroon and also plead for greater commitments of all stakeholders to achieve the expected results.

Mr. MENGATA Pierre Debret, Sub Director in charge of Statistics in the Ministry of Women Empowerment and Family and rapporteur of the Committee presented the activity report of the first semester 2020 and the state of implementation of recommendations of the last session. He highlighted the results obtained despite the context of COVID-19 as well as different constraints and difficulties encountered. He also presented the next steps and strategies to overcome the bottlenecks.

After fruitful discussions by all the 17 members who attended the meeting, some key recommendations were adopted in order to improve the program including:

- Prior transmission of documents to Committee members before the date of the meeting;
- Pay an attention to the disaggregation of gender data up to the local level (municipality, department, region) where possible;
- Support the improvement of the quality administrative data according to the approach of the new law governing statistical activity in Cameroon;
- Advocate for the budgeting for gender statistics in all administrations.



Family picture. Photo credit: Nelly Kamdem-UN Women Cameroon.

UN WOMEN CAMEROON SUPPORTS RELIGIOUS LEADERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR ACTION PLANS TO RESPOND TO HIV AND GBV IN COVID 19 CONTEXT.

From 19 to 21 August 2020 in Ebolowa, UN Women in partnership with the National AIDS Control Committee (CNLS) organized a workshop to develop the performance framework of HIV action plan on religious communities and to sensitize key religious leaders on quality messages to prevent HIV and GBV during in the context of Covid 19. The objective of this workshop was to finalize national HIV action plans of religious denominations in the context of COVID 19 and to build the capacity of religious leaders in sensitization and community mobilization messages for the HIV response.

In his introductory remarks, the Permanent Secretary of the NACC congratulated and thanked the religious leaders for accepting this initiative, which is in line with the circular of the Prime Minister of Cameroon which instructed the development of sectoral plans to fight HIV/AIDS.

During the three days, the workshop took place in strict compliance with the barrier measures. Several presentations related to HIV and with the aim of equipping religious leaders for a better orientation of their speeches in the fight against HIV/AIDS in the context of the Covid19 were held. These included the evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations of the October 9-11, 2019 workshop, the general presentation of the NSP 2021-2023, a reminder of the major orientations of the national HIV plan for religious leaders, the presentation of the experience of the interventions of the actors in the accompaniment of leaders, and the impregnation of the central religious leadership on the messages of sensitization and community mobilization. Similarly, the various group discussions resulted in the presentation of the main changes in the plan and the technical assistance identified and the development of the performance framework.

Since 2018, within the framework of its Strategic Note 2018-2020, UN Women has been working with the National AIDS Control Committee to support HIV policies and programs in order to promote gender equality and equitable access to quality services, to address growing inequalities and to promote LNOB especially vulnerable groups who are disproportionately affected by COVID-19. The recommendations of this workshop on a platform for exchange with religious leaders and the integration of the Religious Leaders Action Plan into the NSP 2021-2023 operational plan will make it easier to wait for results and leave no one behind.

