



REPORT OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE 35th EDITION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY - 08 MARCH 2020

National Theme: Promotion of equality and protection of women's rights by 2020: taking stock of the actions carried out, setting a new course

Global Theme: I am of the generation equality, stand up for women's rights

1. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Cameroon joined the International Community to celebrate the 35th edition of International Women's Day on March 8, 2020. This edition coincides with UN Women's new Generation Equality campaign, which marks the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and its Platform for Action. Adopted in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China, the Beijing Platform for Action is considered the most progressive roadmap for the empowerment of women and girls worldwide.

Through the Gender Thematic Group coordinated by UN Women Cameroon, the United Nations marked this celebration with activities to intensify awareness of gender equality in all areas of public, social and cultural life, as well as to supporting the Government in its evaluation of the Multisectoral Plan of the National Gender Policy. The aim was to better involve all actors in the new targeting of policy directions for the next 10 years.

In the vision of "*Delivery as One*", this celebration took place during a week of activities that culminated on March 8 with the great parade of women and men in the place of May 20 (Unity day of Cameroon). A synergy of action between the United Nations Agencies, the Government, national and international NGOs, CSOs, public and private partners, and donors was created around the sub-themes identified by MINPROFF. It was: Women, Peace and Security ; Women and the Digital Economy ; Women, science and technology; Women, environment and climate change; Women and the Medias; Women and Employment; Legal protection of women's rights; Contribution of CSOs to the promotion and protection of women's rights and National Gender Policy.

The following activities have been implemented:

- The launching of the Generation Equality Campaign through the outstanding parade of the square "*Generation Equality*" composed of 50 young leaders girls and boys, on 8 march, under the high patronage of Mrs. Chantal BIYA, First Lady of Cameroon.
- The outstanding parade of all UN staffs on March 8th ;
- 1 Educational talk with an association of young girl leaders in the fight against HIV on the theme: HIV Vulnerability Reduction Strategy, GE and Nutrition ;
- 1 Educational talk with urban women refugee on the theme: Legal protection of women refugee benefits and duties following the 1325 Resolution ;
- Screening of the film "Ne crains rien je t'aime" and the theatral play about HIV;
- Distribution of sewing starter kits to 250 women beneficiaries in the SCE project sites;
- Production of a Gender Data Brochure in English and Franch;



- Organization of a Gender Cafe on the theme of March 8;
- Distribution of 100 umbrellas and 100 aprons to Bayam Salam women;

2. OBJECTIVES

The general objective was to support the Government in generating a comprehensive reflection on the status of women's rights and the additional measures to be put in place to accelerate the achievement of gender equality, while encouraging young leaders to position themselves as "Generation Equality". More specifically, the celebrations aimed to :

- Promote the « *Delivery as One* »;
- increase awareness and advocacy for gender equality in all areas and popularize legal instruments for the protection of women's rights through innovative ways like art and Cinema
- Support the Government in objective analysis of the results of initiatives for the protection of the rights of women and girls

3. MAIN ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1,000,000 women and men across the country sensitized through television and radio campaigns, internet and other social media channels
- Recording of a TV show with Mrs Hind Jalal, UN Women Cameroon OIC, to take stock of women's rights achievements in Cameroon, broadcasted by Vision 4 Channel
- UN Women OIC recorded a TV show on the situation of Women in Cameroon
- Articles, television and radio programs diffused through various channels;
- 500 young men and women sensitized on rape, incest and HIV through screenings of the Cameroonian film "Ne crains rien je t'aime";
- 100 young women and men take the lead on gender equality, specifically on the issue of HIV;
- 257 women receive starter kits for sewing activities under the SCE project;
- A brochure on gender data produced and disseminated;
- 80 women and men, including urban refugees, are proficient in the laws protecting the rights of women and girls;
- 80 Bayam Salam are provided with umbrellas and aprons to facilitate their work.



4. DETAILS OF MAJOR ACTIVITIES

UN Women organized an Educational talk with young girls leaders in the fight against HIV (RECAJ) in the backdrop of the 35th International Women's day celebrations



The United Nations joins the International Community to celebrate the 35th edition of International Women's Day organized this year under the theme: **“I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights”**. 2020 is a pivotal year in the promotion of gender equality worldwide, as the international community assesses the progress made in favor of women's rights since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995. 2020 marks the launch of the **“Generation Equality Forum”** which is a civil society-centered, global gathering for gender equality, convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the governments of Mexico and France and considered as the most progressive roadmap for the empowerment of women and girls around the world.

In Cameroon, International Women's Day is celebrated under the theme **"Promotion of equality and protection of women's rights by 2020: Take stock of the actions carried out, set a new course"**.

The United Nations in Cameroon, through the Gender Theme Group, kicked off the celebrations with a set of cultural and social activities starting with the organization of an educational talk with an association of young girls leaders in the fight against HIV (RECAJ) under the theme: **“Strategy for reducing HIV-related vulnerability”** held on March 02, 2020 at the UN Women conference room. It is important to recall that HIV prevalence is 9 times higher among girls in the 15-24 age group than among boys and thus action must be taken to end this tragedy. Forty girls and boys participants appreciated the interactive discussions led by the facilitators of UN Women on various questions related to gender, such as social norms, the role of women in their own marginalization, women's rights (employment, land, health, education, etc.).

The participants end up formulating a set of recommendations aiming to stand up for Gender Equality and **“PUT YOUNG GIRLS FIRST”**.



UN Women Cameroon organized a movie show as part of the celebration of the 35th International Women's Day



Some participants in the screening of the film, Photo credit: Nelly KAMDEM-UNW Cameroon

Some participants in the screening of the film, Photo credit: Nelly KAMDEM-UNW Cameroon

The United Nations joins the International Community to celebrate the 35th edition of International Women's Day organized this year under the theme: "I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights". In Cameroon, International Women's Day was celebrated under the theme "Promotion of equality and protection of women's rights by 2020: Take stock of the actions carried out, set a new course".

The United Nations in Cameroon, through the Gender Theme Group, kicked off the celebrations with a set of cultural and social activities. A show has been organized at the Cameroon Red Cross village hall on 5 March 2020. The activity consisted of three performances: a singing performance by the team of young leaders of RECAJ +, an interlude to give the floor to KMERPAD and the screening of the film by Cameroonian filmmaker Thierry NTAMACK entitled "Do not fear anything I love you".

The show "Positive and Unique", by the RECAJ + young leaders team is the result of the collaboration between UN Women, CAMYOSFOP and the Cameroonian Network of Positive Youth (RECAJ+), the result of the art therapy program implemented by the Cameroonian Network of Positive Adolescents and Youth for the benefit of their fellow adolescents and young people in order to raise awareness on the fight against discrimination and stigmatization against HIV/AIDS.



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*Artistic performance by young civil society leaders,
Photo credit: Nelly KAMDEM-UNW Cameroon*

KMERPAD's interlude aimed at sensitizing the general public on the improvement of the living conditions and hygiene of girls and women in Cameroon and Africa by focusing on menstrual precariousness which is an obvious cause of school absenteeism of young girls. KMERPAD is a Cameroonian CSO that has been popularizing for 8 years good menstrual hygiene practices and offers girls and women a healthy, ecological and sustainable solution to manage their menstruation in a sustainable and dignified way.

The film by the Cameroonian Thierry NTAMACK entitled "Don't be afraid, I love you" is intended to be a tool for denouncing violence against women and girls through the art of cinema. This film is the product of an in-depth work with Mrs. Aissatou Doumara, one of the promoters of the national association for the fight against violence against women, prize Simone Veil.



*Official donation of the film by the main actress to the guests,
Photo credit: Nelly KAMDEM-UNW Cameroon*



Two hundred participants, both men and women, appreciated these instructive and sensitizing activities on social norms, the role of women in their own marginalization, women's rights (employment, land, health, education, etc.) and the fight against gender-based violence.

**Un Women organized its 20th edition of its “Gender Café” on the theme
"Promoting equality and protecting women's rights by 2020: taking stock of
actions taken, setting a new course"**



Family photo during the Gender Coffee, Photo credit: UN Women Cameroon

The United Nations joins the International Community to celebrate the 35th edition of International Women's Day organized this year under the theme: “I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women’s Rights”. In Cameroon, International Women's Day was celebrated under the theme "Promotion of equality and protection of women's rights by 2020: Take stock of the actions carried out, set a new course".

The United Nations in Cameroon, through the Gender Theme Group, kicked off the celebrations with a set of cultural and social activities. One of the activities carried out during the celebration was the organization on March 05th 2020 of the 20th edition of the “Gender Café” under the theme : ***"Promotion of equality and protection of women's rights by 2020: taking stock of the actions taken, setting a new course"***,.

The objective of the Gender Cafe was to assess the progress made in favor of women's rights since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action in 1995 and rise awareness on the way forward within the context of the launch of ***"Generation Equality"*** campaign, a civil society-centered, global gathering for gender equality, convened by UN Women.

64 women and men were present representing the government, the United Nations Agencies, and national and international civil society. With the facilitation of Mrs. Allegra Maria Del Pilar Baiocchi, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Cameroon, 3 presentations were made and discussed by the assembly. They were as follows: 1/ ***"Promotion of equality and protection of women's rights by 2020: taking stock of the actions carried out, setting a new course"***, presented by Mr. Atangana Vincent, head of the service on gender dissemination in the MINPROFF; 2/ ***"The Generation***



Equality campaign, what should be understood? How to get involved? presented by Mrs. Hind Jalal, Officer in Charge of UNWOMEN ; 3/ ***“The contribution of the Cameroonian girl in the achievement of gender equality”*** presented by Mrs. Mandio Anastasie who is a young woman and president of the Family & Life association, and Mr. Patrick Okwen, director of the organization eBASE presented the conclusion of a study on ***“An experimenting and learning community : achieving gender equality”***.



Discussion panel, Photo credit: Emanuel Bissila Foukou-RCO

The situational analysis of women worldwide have revealed that women are the poorest people because of they faced many forms of exclusion, whether in the family, at school, in the workplace, at work and in their communities. Participants agreed that changing this situation means promoting equality and protecting women's rights. This is possible if all men and women start from the same starting point, enjoy the same opportunities with equal treatment free of sexual discrimination.

After an animated debate, recommendations were formulated by the participants to pave the way forward :

- ✓ Creation of gender clubs in schools and universities;
- ✓ Including gender equality learning in educational curricula from primary school to realize that : ***“a HeForShe boy is a HeForShe man”***
- ✓ Advocate for the introduction of comprehensive sexual education at school, as the gap in HIV prevalence between boys and girls is very high (1 boy per 9 girls is HIV positive), ensure that taboos are broken within the community so that young girls become involved in the fight against HIV as leaders
- ✓ Include women prisoners as beneficiaries in UN programs;
- ✓ Create networks of girls's associations and promote their involvement through volunteerism.

Mrs. Allegra Maria Del Pilar Baiocchi, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Cameroon closed the the 20th Gender Café with a call to every one to engage in GENERATION EQUALITY and to ensure follow up of recommandations to make tomorrow a better world for women and girls.



UN Women provides Startup Kits to 257 Tailoring Beneficiaries on the occasion of the Celebration of 35th Edition of the International Women's Day in Cameroon



Group picture with beneficiaries from Ngam: Photo credit Njock Paul

Women's economic empowerment remains central to realizing women's rights and gender equality. Aligned with the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UN Women's Second Chance Education and Vocational Learning (SCE) Program is a solution for women who have missed out on education. Under the 2020 international women's Day Theme "I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights", UN Women Cameroon in collaboration with Government, National and International Partners marked the International Women's Day through SCE Project by providing startup kits to 257 tailoring beneficiaries who underwent 8 month trainings. Considering that the year 2020 represents an unmissable opportunity to mobilize global action to achieve gender equality and human rights of all women and girls, SCE Project thus provides startup kits to boosts women's ability to participate equally in existing markets; their access to and control over productive resources, access to decent work, control over their own time, lives and bodies; and increased voice, agency and meaningful participation in economic decision-making at all levels from the household to, community, national and international institutions.

The handing over ceremony was presided by the Senior Divisional Officer (SDO) with participation of partners from various government Ministries, International and National Organizations as well as engagement of media. The SDO lauded this UN Women innovative initiative and beseeched support from partners to the graduates to ensure the sustainability of the project. A sexual reproductive Health (SRH) expert was also invited into this Ceremony to sensitized the graduates of the risk of HIV and SRH issues as they will be facing new challenges after graduation. Beneficiaries were highly overwhelmed, did fashion parades with dresses that they made, danced and immensely thanked UNWOMEN for the wonderful opportunity given to them.



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Group picture with beneficiaries from Bertoua: Photo Credit Angela



Startup kits for beneficiaries: Photo credit Johyeon Lee



Launch of the "Generation Equality" in Cameroon, on the occasion of the 35th edition of the celebration of the International Women's Day on March 08, 2020



*The square "Generation Equality" during the march of 8th March 2020,
Photo credit: Nicoletta Eyamo-UN Women Cameroon*

The United Nations Gender Theme Group in Cameroon, coordinated by UN Women, with the collaboration of Ministry of Woman Empowerment and the Family, officially launched the **Generation Equality Campaign** in the occasion of the celebration of the 35th edition of International Women's Day, celebrated on 8 March, 2020.

The celebration included a series of activities designed to bring together change agents of all ages and genders to immerse themselves in and embrace UN Women's innovative multi-generational campaign: **"Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal future"**.

On Sunday March 8th, a huge march was organized under the high patronage of Mrs. Chantal BIYA, First Lady of Cameroon, with the outstanding parade of the square **"Generation Equality"** composed of 50 young leaders girls and boys.

Generation Equality is a civil society-centered, global gathering for gender equality, convened by UN Women to link all the advocacy elements together, emphasizing youth leadership and the strong intergenerational nature of the mobilization and youth leadership to chart a path forward a fresh and bold feminist agenda and to create a multilateral gender-progressive partnership.

In today's world, both women and men -and girls and boys- all over the world are speaking up for themselves and for those who have been silenced and stigmatized for far too long. Many are from a new generation. They are seizing the moment to reimagine economies, societies, and political systems so that they uphold human rights and achieve gender equality, leaving no one behind.

UN Women is bringing together the next generations of women's rights activists with the gender equality advocates and visionaries who were instrumental in creating the Beijing Platform for Action more than two decades ago. Collectively, these change makers of all ages and genders can tackle the unfinished business of empowering women through a new, groundbreaking, multigenerational campaign: **"Generation Equality: Realizing women's rights for an equal future"**. The **Generation Equality** campaign demands equal pay, equal sharing of unpaid care and domestic work, an end to



sexual harassment and all forms of violence against women and girls, health-care services that respond to their needs, and their equal participation in political life and decision-making in all areas of life.



Young girl and boy leaders manifesting the parity 50-50 during the march of 08th March 2020, Photo credit: Nicoletta Eyamo-UN Women Cameroon

UN Women OIC recorded a TV show on the situation of Women in Cameroon

As part of the celebrations of the 35th edition of International Women's Day, UN Women OIC, Mrs Hind Jalal, recorded a TV program with Vision 4 Channel, broadcast on a large scale on the national territory on March 12, 2020. During the TV show, Mrs Jalal highlighted the main achievements in Women's rights in Cameroon as well as the main challenges to be overcome to promote women and girls empowerment.



Photo credit: Vision 4