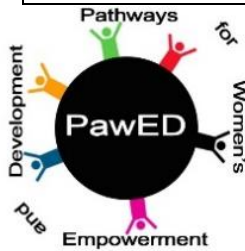


Pathways for Women's Empowerment and Development/Integrated Agricultural Training Center (PaWEDIATC)



"Nothing for us without us"

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THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN THE SHADOW OF CRISES IN CAMEROON

About Pathways for Women's Empowerment and Development/Integrated Agricultural Training Center (PaWEDIATC)

Founded in 2016, PaWEDIATC is a not-for-profit, independent, non-partisan, research and advocacy organization set up to accelerate the achievements of the SDGs by advancing the protection of human rights, particularly the rights of women, girls and other social vulnerable groups and persons.

26% of the recommendations accepted by Cameroon during the previous UPR were specifically on SDG 5, although the all 133 accepted recommendations intersect with the rights of women and girls

Main Issues

Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

Violence against women and girls in Cameroon persists at alarming rates. In 2022 alone, 979,000 people were estimated in need of protection from GBV.

35% of GBV protection services have been disrupted in the restive regions.

Rape constitutes more than 20% of GBV in the crisis regions of Northwest, Southwest and Far North. Statistics are mitigated by the absence of a comprehensive and holistic data collection on GBV. Policies are not enough, action against impunity and assistance is needed.

Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

The Penal Code makes abortion legal only following issuance of a certificate by the prosecutor. Access to family planning services is limited especially to women and girls in the crisis zones. Non-binary sexual orientation or gender identity is still criminalized. Internally Displaced women and girls bear the brunt of persistent high rates of pregnancies,

Violence persists at varying high rates, intimate partner violence 65%, physical and emotional violence 28%, economic abuse (denial of resources, services and opportunities) 25%, widowhood rites and widow's rights, early marriages 9%, female genital mutilations and political or institutional violence are on the rise.

unsafe abortions, and sexually transmittable diseases due to the lack of/ or inadequate information about family planning. IDP women and girls are scared to go to the hospital due to stigma, language barriers or lack of identity documents and financial constraints.

Women's Participation in Political and in Public Life

Discrimination against women in political and public life remains conspicuously high in Cameroon. This is compounded by insecurity from the ongoing political turmoil, lack of political will and absence of a gender quota in the Electoral Code.

Following 2018-2020 elections, only 39 of 360 Mayors, 61 of 180 Parliamentarians, 26 of 100 Senators 11 of 65 Regional councilors and 0 of 14 City Mayors are women and these inequalities add to existing ones in the judiciary and the administration. DDR processes, MND and COVID 19 humanitarian plan failed to be gender responsive.

Recommendations

On Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

- ❖ Enact a comprehensive law on the fight against Sexual Gender-Based Violence and consider rape committed by Defense and security forces an aggravating circumstance.
- ❖ Finalize the long overdue project on the Code of Persons and the Family

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On Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights

- ❖ To Repeal Legislative provisions that restrict and criminalize abortion.
- ❖ To Repeal legislative provisions that criminalize consensual same-sex conduct between adults.
- ❖ Develop and expand education on sexuality and reproductive health especially in schools and rural community.

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On Women's Participation in Political and in Public Life.

- ❖ Introduce gender quotas to bridge the representation gap and inconsistency.
- ❖ Mainstream and Promote women and girl's participation in all policies and projects through quotas.
- ❖ Insert special quotas for women and girls with disabilities in all policies and projects.

CAMEROON