

Project Execution Interim Report for 2022.

Title: Empowering Rural Women and Youths in Bui Division affected by the ongoing socio-political crisis in Cameroon on Sustainable Agriculture and Economic Development

A. Introduction

Within the strive towards the mitigation of the effects of the ongoing crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, the Tertiary Sisters of Saint Francis with support from Women world Day of Prayers Austria (WWDP) empowers the women and youths through sustainable income generating activities, economic activities and life skills to ensure their wellbeing.

This interim report presents the first year of a 03 years project from 2022 to 2024. The activities carried out within this period includes; sensitization and registration of women affected by crisis in various groups and communities, Capacity development of workshops on sustainable agriculture, counseling sessions with women and youths, supporting women with farm inputs and Rehabilitation of vulnerable children in Saint Francis Home for skill development. The listed actions carried out have shown great signs of impact already as we are able to see already some positive changes in the lives of the beneficiaries; many persons have overcome severe traumatic conditions, internally displaced women who had no farms, now have access to farm with quality inputs. Below is a detail of the activities carried so far which marks the first-year execution

B. Activity implementation

1. Sensitization and Registration of women affected by the crisis in the various group

The socio-political crisis in Cameroon records devastating effects on virtually daily bases on the population of the Northwest and Southwest Regions of the country. The rate of internal displacement since the start of the crisis remains the highest the country has ever witnessed. Due to the burning of houses, properties, random gun shooting at times between the state forces and none state forces, arrest and kidnappings, many people have been forced to move to safer areas as internally displaced persons. Tertiary Sisters of Saint Francis working with these women, always encourage them to come together into groups for easy coordination, follow ups and ensure sustainability.

Through this project and with the assistance of our contact persons in various villages around Bui Division, we carried out sensitization on the need to group and take collective actions to better the lives of the women and the host community as well. Internally displaced women were registered within 04 organizations. 02 of the organizations were already existing and we facilitated the creation of 02 of the groups. The groups are established in 04 villages which included 311



Sensitization and registration of girls and women

members in total. The villages include; Shisong, Bangam, Mbuluf and Melim all in the Bui Division, Northwest Region of Cameroon. The groups have their regular meetings and we have attended so far 8 meetings (02 per village) for follow up, coaching and counselling.

2. Counseling sessions for Women groups and Individuals

Knowing what are target population have gone through within the crisis period, a lot of trauma healing and counseling is needed to relieve them. Many of our beneficiaries opened up to us on the fact that they had lost all hope in life and some were even ready to go an extra mile of committing suicide as they saw no need of living after their husbands, child/children killed, house and properties burnt down



Group counselling

and farms they depended solely on not accessible because of the crisis.

The counseling and trauma healing sessions were done in two ways; group and individuals. We had a general session that all the members came together at the Saint Francis Home for Skills training conference hall and 08 different group sessions within the four villages. On individual

bases, we attended to 131 women who willing booked for our attention for counselling as of this reporting date.

The counseling sessions created an avenue where experiences where shared, coping mechanism towards trauma discussed, the need for reconciliation which gives hope for a better future.

At the start of this action, the women were mostly reluctant to speak up but after encouragement and counselling, they happily shared their experiences and acknowledged the fact that they need to move on and be hopeful for the future.

3. Capacity development workshops on Sustainable agriculture and donation of farm inputs

Within this first year of the project, a capacity building workshop was organized with the aim of empowering the women on sustainable agriculture more to the fact that agriculture is the most practiced activity in Bui Division of Cameroon where project is located. This was a perfect avenue to ring to the notice of the women the best practices to use in order to regain the quality of the soil. In recent times due to the advert of many farming chemicals including fertilizers, herbicides among others the soil has lost its natural content and is degrading gradually. The health consequences of this was also discussed and the women encouraged to stay organic. Crops with short life cycles were introduced and methods on proper planting, maintenance and preservations were discussed in detail. In all, the 311 women who were involved in this workshop, were donated farm tools. Equally, improved seeds were shared to these women to ensure quality food production. The seeds included, beans, maize, and soya beans seeds.

The project design mentioned the provision of fertilizers to the women. During the execution period, the cost of fertilizer has gone up from 16000 FRS CFA to



Training on the production of organic manure

45000FRS CFA due to the Russian – Ukraine war as most of the fertilizer in the country is imported from Ukraine. With this, it gave use the opportunity to source for other alternatives

which can be more sustainable. In place of just donating chemical fertilizers, the women were trained on producing organic manure with the use of local materials which to an extent is available in the communities at a less cost compared to the chemical fertilizer. All the women were given a good quantity from the test production to try it out in their farms. The groups were then supported with the needed items and technical knowledge to produce their own organic manure. So far, the impact of the manure has been amazing and many of the women are now gathering the needed resources to be producing the manure in great quantities for future use.

Even though the production of the manure took a longer time (1 month) from start to finished, the outcome is worth the time as the farms of the women stand as great evidence. With this development, we are gradually considering in the future, to train other women on the production of organic manure instead of donating the already made chemical fertilizer which is not healthy compared to the organic.

4. Rehabilitation of vulnerable children in Saint Francis Home for skill development

The project targeted the rehabilitation of vulnerable children who are victims of the ongoing crisis. A lot of children have become orphans due to the crisis and most of them even lack where to stay and as such stay in uncompleted buildings and streets. We have equally encountered some of these children who are leaving with external family members who are maltreating them. Thanks to this project, we were able to support the tuition fee, boarding and feeding of 15 vulnerable children in Saint Francis Home for Skill Training located in Njavnyuy – Bui Division. The training will be a 03-year period after which the children will become experts in their various chosen fields of training. The table below indicates the number of beneficiaries per field of training

S/N	Department	Number of trainees
1	Weldering	2
2	Sewing	6
3	Carpentry	7
Total		15

The 15 children sponsored in this program alongside their training program, they are studying the general subjects offered by the training institution which include; Basic English and French language, Computer studies, Agriculture and Physical Education.

C. Challenges faced during the execution

Within this project execution period, the only challenges we faced were as a result of the ongoing crisis which included, road blocks and frequent lock downs declared by the none state fighters. Blocking of the road is a method the none state fighters used to prevent the state military the access to enter into the communities. There were moments we actually rescheduled programs because of this. Thanks to our involvement in the communities, as we were permitted to visit these communities because of our impact and due to the fact that we are apolitical but seek to restore/maintain the dignity of the local people within their difficult moments.

One of the challenges we faced too was the high cost of items. In order to address this, we replaced the provision of fertilizer which had more than 100% price increment to the teaching of organic manure production which instead seems more effective.

Despite these challenges, we were still able to carry out all our activities for this phase of the project as captured above.

D. Finances

The first year of the project is executed at a total sum of 8, 220, 830 FRS CFA (Euro 12, 532.57). 10,000 Euro covers the cost from WWDP and the rest being local contribution.

	FCFA	Euros
Amount received from WDP	6.550.000	10,000
Total spent on the project	6.550.000	10,000
Balance	-	-

E. Conclusion

We remind highly indebted to Women World Day of Prayer Austria (WWDP) for the great support given us that has continuously sustain our desires and objectives of bringing hope, support and development to the most vulnerable victims of the ongoing Anglophone crisis.

The joy express by our beneficiaries, the physical observation of farm produce, gradual improvement of living standards and reconciliation sessions we are updated on, are all evidence to justify the project so far is impactful.

For the second year of the project, we will have the following actions

1. Continuous counselling and Trauma healing for women and children
2. Donation of improved seeds/ seedlings to women

3. Training of women on organic manure and organic pesticide
4. Training of women on business skill development
5. Continuous training of children in vocational institution
6. Follow ups, coaching, monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

Once more, we thank you for your support and hope the next year of the project will be equally hitch free and give us more impact on the beneficiaries.

May the Almighty bless and protect you.

Sr. Hedwig Vinyo
Project Coordinator