

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

PaWEDIATC

Issue 1: Sexual and Gender-Based Violence

- 12 countries made recommendations regarding different aspects of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence against women and girls in Cameroon.
- We welcome policy development including the NDS30 adopted in 2020 , National Action Plan for the Elimination of Female Genital Mutilation and National strategy against GBV
- But regret the high rates of sexual and gender- based violence against women and girls in Cameroon with 20% increase in rape cases in the conflict regions of NW,SW, FN... In 2022 alone, over 979,000 people were in need of protection from sexual violence from these regions and 35% of GBV protection services were disrupted. Perpetrators continue to go unpunished and survivors are without protection and access to psychosocial support services.

Recommendations – Issue 1

We recommend:

- a. The Enactment of a comprehensive law on the fight against Gender-Based Violence and the classification of SGBV committed by Defense and security forces as an aggravating circumstance.

- b. To finalize the long overdue project on the Code of Persons and the Family

Issue 2: Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHRs)

- 12 countries raised concerns on the SRHR of women, girls and non-binary identity and sexual orientation persons in Cameroon. They recommended the removal of restrictions on abortion rights and decriminalisation of same sex relationships.
- we welcome improved family planning services offered by UNFPA including supply and security of contraceptive and maternal health products; and move towards universal health coverage by government
- We regret the absence of a comprehensive legislation on SRHRs, restrictions on abortion and prosecution of non-binary and different sexual orientation. The inaccessibility to health services for persons with HIV/AIDS and absence of sexual and reproductive education for women and girls, particularly in rural areas.

Recommendations – Issue 2

- a. Repeal Legislative provisions that criminalise abortion
- b. Repeal legislation that criminalises consensual same-sex relation between adults.
- c. Develop and expand education on sexuality and reproductive health to the entire country especially rural community.

Issue 3: Women's Participation in Political and in Public Life.

- recommendations were made for Cameroon to take steps for the adequate representation of women in political life, and encourage their economic empowerment
- We welcome the slight increase from 31% to 33% of women in parliament, the mentioning of gender equality and gender responsive budgeting in the NDS30
- However, discrimination against women in political and public life remains conspicuously high in Cameroon both in elective and nominated positions in the administration, judiciary and legislation. There is no legislated affirmative quota for women in elective and nominated positions and the electoral code is silent on this.

Recommendations – Issue 3

- a. Introduce gender quotas to bridge the representation gap and inconsistency of gender representation in elective and appointed positions.
- b. Promote women and girl's participation in humanitarian crisis, conflict mitigation and peacebuilding processes giving due consideration to the needs of women with disabilities and other socially vulnerable groups and persons through inclusion.

Thank you



For your kind attention

Merci

Miya

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