



ABEMO Annual Activity Report for 2008 - 2009

BACKGROUND

ABEMO is a non-profit, Non Governmental Organization that envisions a just, compassionate and democratic society, where men and women participate equally in all aspects of life.

www.abemocameroon.org

Our Mission

Main goal to Improve on the standards of living of women and children with the mission to:

- Promote human rights and peace for girls and women.
- Promote continuing education and empowerment of girls and women.
- Advocate / lobby for issues affecting the lives of women and girls.
- Stimulate public opinion on issues concerning girls and women and create a platform for discussions.
- Encourage the application of women's knowledge and skills to their problems and

their participation in solving them.

PROGRAMMES

1. Civic Education on the Eradication of Female Genital Mutilation

The project started since 2001 with the goal of building a general consensus in community on the eradication of FGM. The community believes that FGM initiates the girls into womanhood, controls female sexuality, controls birth rate and conserves the monogamous status of the women. The programme involves sensitization meetings, workshops, community advocacy and mentoring.

The discussions in all the meetings geared toward a general consensus to stop the practice but to continue the traditional dance of "Nkim" (performed by victim).

Evaluation of the project in 2008 revealed that seven of the nine communities primarily targeted do



not have any new records, within the last three years. Whereas the other two Araru and Ekonemon-awa were still practicing FGM: possible reasons were linked to the fact that these communities were very isolated from the others and education was not intensive due to lack of enough resources.

2. Conflict Resolution Workshops

To help female leaders to better identify and understand conflict, resolve conflicts and establish a climate of cooperation in the families, groups and communities, ABEMO trained 40 women's group leaders in the Southwest province of Cameroon. Workshops content included: Stages of Conflict Development; Early Warning signals of Conflicts; Sources of Conflict in the Community; Basic Ways for Handling Conflict in Life; Conflict Resolution Growth; Important Skills in Resolving Conflicts; Steps of mediation Session; Assertive Communication Skills; Active Listening Skill; Conflicts and Sustainable Development .

3. Girls' Access to Basic Education

The aim of this activity is to increase girls' access to basic education on the Ejagham Community, with the following objectives: Promote children's rights to basic education, create awareness on issues, which have continual hindered girls' access to basic education in the area and assist under privileged school pupils.

More girls and boys from 06 communities benefited in this last year from; Akwen, Eyumojock, Inokon, Ndepya, Otu and Kembong. Activities include; sensitization and supply of basic school needs.

4. The fight against violence against women and girls in Cameroon.

Since 2002, ABEMO has been operating free legal educational services for victims of FGM and widowhood and other GBV victims in Cameroon. These has proven to be a highly effective means of defending the rights of victims of widowhood, sexual violence and



other abuses, and they had a significant impact on the incidence of FGM in the region, as potential perpetrators recognized that there were now concrete consequences for the abuse of women.

The problem of violence against women and girls is not restricted to the Ejaghams—it is common among the Cameroonian population in the entire southwest and Northwest as well. Combined with both a lack of knowledge of and poor enforcement of women's rights, Cameroonian women and girls have little legal, medical, or educational recourse with regards to gender-based violence. In 2008 ABEMO organized 16 days of Activism against gender based violence with the participation of over 120 women's groups in the South West Region of Cameroon.

Thus, ABEMO runs the legal education and sensitizations services in the local communities in Southwest, providing free legal assistance to victims and training community individuals and groups on GBV issues.

The program targets women and girls in Southwest and in the region around Ejagham settlements. The project also covers urban populations in Buea, Mamfe and Kumba towns and the villages - and rurally-based populations in the districts surrounding Eyumojock sub division. By increasing education about GBV and women's rights in general, the program indirectly benefits the entire population of these areas, not just women and girls.

2008 / 09 activities were dedicated largely to sensitization, referral network, broadcast of radio messages, trainings, as well as provision of response and psychosocial services.

5. Micro Credit Scheme for women

Women in the rural communities face the greatest challenge in being unable to participate in economic life. This has rendered them low self-respect and social dignity. Since inception ABEMO has been trying to take appropriate measures to equip them to attain their rightful places in the development process.



This programme enables women to come out of their homes, organize with other women, establish their non-formal sector work into viable economic ventures, obtain grants, earn incomes, support their families, become more independent and participate in a world broader than their homes.

Activities involved:

Training on how to manage small-scale home businesses, keep financial records and save money. Women in some settlements were trained on how to produce consumers for income as well as other skills on keeping records.

Micro Credit / Seed Money to start small business is provided for women to start small businesses, while others who are in business and need to expend are also being supported.

Women were encouraged to open saving accounts in Credit Unions or other financial bodies. Women are assisted on procedure and preparation of registration papers for business.

6. HIV / AIDS Education in communities and schools

To promote the dignity and humanity of students and community members living in the forest region of Cameroon, ABEMO is providing HIV/AIDS prevention for vulnerable youth and community members.

In the last year, ABEMO's target population included the community population in the Eyumujock region, as well as urban students and community members in Eyumujock town.

HIV activities reached the entire rural population in Kembong, Ajah, Ewelle, Afap, Ogomoku, and Eyumujock town, totaling approximately 10,000 students and community members. The program's primary concern is community youth (12-25 years of age) in the settlements, who represent approximately 28% of the population. Out-of-school youth are reached in their places of work, at home, and in Off Licenses where youth regularly gather. Peer Liaisons also targeted religious and traditional leaders, and medical health professionals. Over the course of the year, youth attendance at ABEMO organized



health talks, video shows, and sensitizations was over 7,000 individuals and 21 peer educators formed 94 peer groups. Activities carried out within this period embraced; peer education, Behavior Change and Communication (BCC), community trainings, and activities with health centers conducted by medical trainer.

7. Transport facilities for Women

Six (6) female motor bike riders were trained. This activity followed the donation of six bikes to women's groups in the communities. Bikes are used for the following activities in the community of the recipient and its environ:

- FGM eradication campaign in rural inaccessible communities
- HIV/AIDS sensitisation & education campaign
- Delivery and monitoring of micro credit scheme and materials
- Delivery support materials to girls under the scholarship programme
- Convey women and children to health care centres and market

8. Capacity Building / Institutional Strengthening

Capacity building seminars are intended to provide members with specific skills that they require effectively implementing their goals and becoming more visible in the community. Members are provided with capacities in organizational dynamics, fundraising strategies, and how to develop log frames.

In 2008 three ABEMO members had opportunities to attend capacity building and training seminars in the country.

9. National Conference

ABEMO members participated in national conferences and seminars, Networks especially during the celebration of International women's day. In 2007 ABEMO organized regional seminars and workshops. These workshops were attended by over 100 women from both the Southwest and Northwest Regions.

10. On- Site Visits

Four members of the group and two field staff made usual on-site visits to evaluate the progress, participation and results of the HIV



/ AIDS, FGM / legal and Micro credit programs. ABEMO policy directs the organization to use its funds during the triennium to visit on-going programmes.

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