



CEFAP/LADIES CIRCLE

Cercle des Filles et Femmes Actives pour l'amélioration des conditions socio-économiques des jeunes filles et des femmes



IAW / AIF Water and Pads Project -

CEFAP February 2021

The Water and Pads Project for schoolgirls is an initiative put in place by IAW and implemented in many countries around the world through some partners organizations with the aim to provide a basic knowledge of sexual and reproductive health to school-girls in these rural areas.

The periodic bleeding is subject to shame and taboos mostly in Africa and some Asian countries, especially in rural areas. This can have dire consequences for schoolgirls. They lack any knowledge of sexual and reproductive health. Sanitary pads are almost unavailable. To avoid mobbing many schoolgirls hide at home during their period using dirty rags. Absence from classes amount to 5 days per month consequently they have to abandon school prematurely.

These adolescents are particularly at risk of sexual violence, undesired pregnancies and forced marriage.

In Cameroon, we have already implemented three phases of the project in rural areas, especially in Bandjoun and Medjo, also in some schools in Yaounde, such as the Jesus and Mary College.

At the beginning of February 2021 we went back to Medjo where we had the third phase of the project that was planned in 2020 but due the pandemic, we could not make it. We implemented it in two steps: The first step included educative talk, advocacy to change the mindset around taboo and shame about the periodic bleeding. Then we give to the girls protection kits against COVID19 and reusable sanitary pads. Unfortunately the booklets "La puberté et l'hygiène menstruelle, petit guide pour les filles" were not available at that time because the books sent by IAW from Switzerland never had arrived in Cameroon. Therefore IAW had asked us from CEFAP to print 2'000 booklets directly in Cameroon. The whole stock has divided among the two IAW- organizations CEFAP and RENATA. So there too the activity could get implemented.

The second step of WP activities was carried out on 17 February 2021. We handed out the booklets. Beforehand we had distributed reusable sanitary pads, buckets to wash hands in schools, soaps, hand sanitizer and face masks. This is a protection of COVID-19 for the girls and also the entire community in Medjo and Bandjoun.

The Water and Pads project for schoolgirls has been a wonderful project. We can even call it a revolutionary initiative that is really changing mindset within the communities. Gradually it is dispelling shame and taboos around the periodic bleeding. The project also helps to keep girls in school and to have a good menstrual hygiene, because now they can use sanitary pads during their periodic bleeding and feel comfortable at school

We are now looking forward to the next phase this year 2021.Thanks.

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