



RENATA
Réseau National des Associations des Tantes
Cameroun in collaboration with
the International Alliance of Women IAW / AIF

Report about activities on the importance of the availability of water and towels in schools: the case of the Bikok Technical High School and Kongola Jeolao Public School in Maroua

The Water and Pads WP project aims to help young girls and teenagers facing the various challenges related to puberty, menstrual cycle and hygiene. So in this regard, RENATA had organized different activities in the central and remote regions of Cameroon. Their theme was focused on menstrual hygiene.



Concerning the WP activity carried out on Wednesday, February 23, 2022 at the **Bikok Technical High School**, it started with an educational talk among the participants and the RENATA Aunties. Let us emphasize here that most parents are little or not interested in their daughters' menstruation in the sense that they do not provide their children with sanitary pads during the menstruation nor do they know how to provide this to them, which might help the girls to manage their protection during the period-bleeding. Menstruation and this particular issue had prompted the Aunties to focus on menstrual hygiene. They are hoping to contribute towards a behavioural change. Even though the girls were not able to receive sanitary pads, at the beginning they were promised that donations would be made to them. This was followed by a demonstration, where the participants received pens, juice, doughnuts and books.

On Friday, March 18, 2022, RENATA's Aunties went to the **Kongola Jeolao public school** in the extreme north of Cameroon, a locality of the city of Maroua. They organized an awareness campaign for girls aged between 09 and 15 years. At the beginning the group of young people was directed to the sanitary bin for handwashing. This had been offered to the school by RENATA. Then they were admitted to the classroom where each of them received a face mask. The talk began at about 11:00 am with a welcome from the school principal who expressed the appreciation to the team for this activity and then encouraged the students to join in. The main theme and objective was to break the taboos about menstruation and to provide teenagers with tools on menstrual hygiene and the possibility of accessing sanitary napkins

The different sub-themes discussed with the youth were among others

- Puberty
- Body hygiene
- Menstruation: a natural stage when growing up
- What to do when menstruation arrives? Menstrual hygiene
- Reusable and disposable pads
- Tips for the disposal of used protective equipment
- Hygiene tips
- Health tips
- Know your menstrual cycle!

The sessions were particularly interesting because the youth were very participatory and asked questions about how to count their menstrual cycle.

Difficulties encountered:

- The mobilization of young girls was not easy because of the teachers' strike, which influenced the number of girls present, hence the failure to reach the planned quotas, and also the fact that there were not sufficient sanitary napkins
- The financial budget is very insufficient for the activities in the 3 schools
- Not enough sanitary pads for the girls

Conclusion: The budgetary problems must be examined.

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