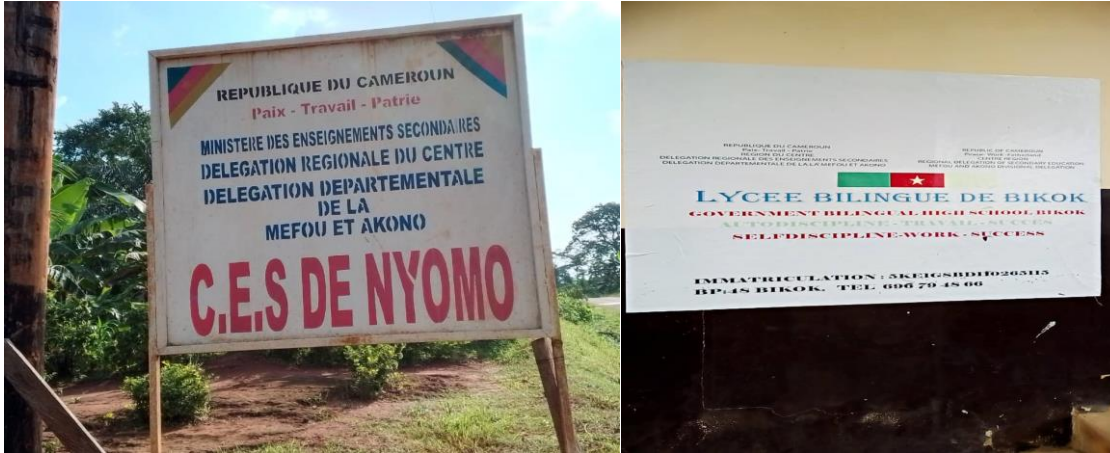




RENATA
Réseau National des Associations des Tantes
Cameroun in collaboration with
the International Alliance of Women IAW / AIF

Report on "Water and Pads" WP activities at the high schools of Bikok and Nyomo, Northern Cameroon on 24 October 2023.



Menstrual hygiene is an integral part of a young girl's life and has an impact on her education, which is one of the aspects most often to consider when the subject is raised. However, many young girls don't have access to the right information during their period because the subject is still taboo: their parents are ignorant and, as often having low incomes, cannot offer their daughters single-use sanitary pads..

With this in mind, we carried out the WP activity on 24 October 2023 in Bikok, a rural area. The high schools involved were the bilingual lycée Bikok and the C.E.S in Nyomo. The main aim was to raise awareness among young girls and boys about menstrual hygiene.

We began our WP activities at Bikok Technical High School, where we were warmly welcomed by the headmaster and his staff. Then it was time to set the scene and mobilize the school's students. The educational talk itself began with a presentation by the RENATA Aunties.

We began by presenting the WATER AND PAD activities and its general objective. The topics covered during the talk were: puberty (definition; signs of puberty in girls and boys) and menstrual hygiene, the definition of the concepts like, menstruation; menstrual hygiene; behavior during the period; type of underwear and preferred color; types of pads to use and management of pads (washable or disposable after use). We finished the session with a demonstration of how to make washable pads. With no break, it was the moment for questions and answers.

Here are some of the questions raised:

- What causes an irregular cycle?

Generally it is due to stress, sadness or a lot of joy.

- Is there a specific age for menstruation?

Not really, periods can start very early or very late. It depends on the individual morphology.

We finished the session by distributing kits, refreshments, sanitary pads (for those who had already started their period), pens, educational booklets and a snack. We took a family photo with the students and staff and had a closing speech from the headmaster.

After a short break, we headed straight for the C E S de Nyomo, where we were greeted by the headmaster. He received us in his office. We introduced ourselves and explained why we were there.

Then we set up our decor and got the pupils involved. We covered the same topics as before: puberty, menstrual hygiene and management of used towels. We finished the WP activity by distributing sanitary pads, booklets on young girls' sexual health, pens and refreshments. Of course, everything ended with a closing remark from the director, who was very happy to welcome us to his premises. He hopes to see us again very soon for other WP activities.

Difficulties encountered:

- Poor road conditions, which made our journey very difficult, especially going from one village to another was not easy at all.
- Transport was very expensive because of the poor state of the roads.

Strong points:

The director of the Nyomo C.E.S. paid tribute to RENATA and congratulated us on our work. He said that he met us in Southern Cameroon and since then he has followed RENATA's activities. Satisfied with the WP activities offered to his pupils, he was keen to offer us a drink.

Schools	Number of girls	Number of boys	Material Distributed
Lycée bilingue de Bikok	143	50	Pads Booklets Pens Snacks
C.E.S de Nyomo	162	60	Pads Booklets Pens Snacks
TOTAL	305	110	

No incidents were reported during the WP activities. The talks were participative, despite the short time available to develop other themes that the students wanted to address. In conclusion, WP activities are welcome in secondary schools.

Best practices:

Boys are committed to providing positive support for girls during menstruation!

RENATA participants:

- FOCAL POINT / BELLA JEANNETTE
 - FACILITATOR / BILOA BARBARA
 - MOUNDOC ANATALIE
 - MBAZOA BENEDICTE