



November 2022 Featured Project

GROW – Girls' Resilience, Opportunities, and Wellbeing in Cameroon

Introducing Authentique Memorial Empowerment Foundation (AMEF)

GROW – Girls' Resilience, Opportunities, and Wellbeing (Cameroon)

Mission:

- ensure that the rights of children and other vulnerable groups are protected
- support the development of children and youth
- empower women through formal and non-formal education



About Cameroon

- About 29 million people; large youth population with high fertility rates
- Plagued by conflict, high poverty, armed groups, poor school and health infrastructure
- Dramatic increase in internal and external displacement
- Human rights abuses by armed groups and government forces



Life challenges for women in Cameroon

- One of the most neglected conflicts in the world
- Forced closures of over 90 percent of schools in the region
- Girls lack education opportunities and are often displaced from their homes and communities
- Young women risk exploitation, abuse, early marriage, and child pregnancy
- Coerced associations with armed groups leave many adolescents stigmatized and pregnant or with children
- Girls may rely on prostitution and survival sex
- In region, 855,000 children are out of school; girls have literacy levels of just 59 percent



The Project

Provides conflict-affected, out-of-school young mothers and pregnant girls with access to education, livelihood opportunities, and psychosocial support

- **Accelerated learning** offers ability to read and write
- **Vocational and business training**, plus business start-up kits, offer immediate reduction in poverty and exploitation risk
- **Adolescent clubs** and **psychosocial support** improve mental wellbeing and resilience, empowering girls to overcome the negative effects of conflict, displacement, and stigma



The Project

- **Life skills learning** increases confidence and understanding and boosts practical skills (sexual and reproductive health knowledge and parenting skills)
- **Community advocacy** will enable girls experiencing stigma and isolation because of pregnancy, sexual violence, and/or association with armed groups to reintegrate to their communities, improving safety for them and their children

Work with male and female community leaders on girls' rights and how to prevent and respond to exploitation or violence will reduce the risks of exploitation, violence, and stigmatization for all girls in the community.

DIRECT IMPACT: 120; INDIRECT IMPACT: 1,380

Budget

Item	Description	Cost
Curricula Development	Development of accelerated learning and psychosocial support curricula (5 days) including facilitator transport, accommodation, and per diem, and refreshments	\$549
Community Volunteer Teacher Training	Training of community volunteer teachers (4 days) including participants' transport, hall hire, training materials, and participant kits, banners and refreshments	\$856
Accelerated Learning (5 months)	Includes community meetings, beneficiary selection, teacher stipends. Learning materials, floor mats, handwashing stations, T-shirts for teachers, and education officer (50 percent time)	\$7,095
Technical & Vocational Education, Formal Education	Vocational trainer fee, start-up materials and back-to-school kits	\$27,485
Life Skills and Psychosocial Support (4 months)	IEC materials, workshop materials, facilitator stipend, child protection officer (50% time)	\$3,610
Coaching and Monitoring	Monthly coaching and monitoring, staff communication allowance, baseline and endline	\$1,785
Staffing and Operations	Project coordinator, MEAL officer, finance officer, office running costs	\$8,511
TOTAL		\$49,891

About AMEF

- Conceived in 2006 after Dr. Margaret Niger-Thomas Agbaw, a social anthropologist and gender expert, saw prevalence of early and forced marriages among girls and women in rural areas of SW Cameroon
- Initial focus was to empower single mothers economically to allow them to meet the costs of education for their children, reducing the risk of early marriage for the children
- When conflict broke out in 2016/2017, AMEF re-oriented operations to meet emerging needs of displaced populations
- Now provides services in four areas: education and child protection, economic development and livelihood, protection (GBV, peacebuilding activities, and human rights advocacy), and health, nutrition, and WASH

Share your thoughts

1. With a multi-pronged approach to creating a path to a more secure future, how do you think each aspect of this project strengthens the others?
2. Given the extent of trauma experienced by the adolescent girls in the NWSW regions, will this intervention be adequate or do you believe there should be more sustained interventions? Do you think young people are more resilient?
3. How do you think addressing the stigma of association with armed groups (albeit involuntarily) can impact the larger community?

