

Combatting the Surge of Conflict-Related Sexual and Physical Violence in Cameroon's Northwest Region

A Path to Justice, Healing and Empowerment

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List of Acronyms

AoR: Area of responsibility

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination

CSO: Civil Society Organization

DRC: Danish Refugee Council

GBV: Gender Based Violence

GBV: Gender Based Violence

GBVIMS: Gender Based Violence Information Management System

ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross

IDPs: Internally Displaced Persons

M&E: Monitoring and Evaluation

MEL: Monitoring Evaluation and Learning

NAP: National Action Plan

NRC: Norwegian Refugee Council

NSAG: Non-State Armed Group

NW: Northwest

OCHA: Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

RuWCED: Rural Women Center for Education and Development

SDG: Sustainable Development Goals

SGBV: Sexual Gender Based Violence

SRHR: Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights

SW: Southwest

ToC: Theory of Change

UN: United Nations

UNFPA: United Nations Population Fund

UNGA: United Nations General Assembly

UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund

UNSCR: United Nations Security Council Resolution

UNSG: United Nations Secretary-General

UNTF: United Nations Trust Fund

VAWG: Violence Against Women and Girls

VTIRuWED: Vocational Training Institute for Rural Women for Education and Development

WHO: World Health Organization

WILPF: Women International league for Peace & Freedom

Key Definitions

Sexual Violence is defined as “any sexual act, attempt to obtain a sexual act, unwanted sexual comments or advances, or acts to traffic or otherwise directed against a person’s sexuality using coercion, by any person regardless of their relationship to the victim, in any setting, including but not limited to home and work” (WHO, 2014, p.2)

Physical Violence is defined as the use of physical force that causes or may cause injury or harm (WHO, 2002).

Violence Against Women and Girls is defined as any act of gender-based violence causing physical, sexual, or psychological harm to women and girls (UN, 1993).

Armed Conflict is defined as a situation where organized armed groups use sustained violence against each other or a state (ICRC, 2008)

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Preface

In 2023, I was informed that 16 years old had been sexually assaulted by her male guardian while his wife was away. This girl happened to have lived with them since she was 11 years old, being forced to migrate because of the conflicts. She supported them in caring for their children, and they also sent her to school. The family, especially the wife in the house, was kind to her and taught her everything there is about her sexual health. This explains why when this man assaulted her overnight, she was able to report to a neighbor in the morning who then called my organization. Fast forward to everything that was done to support this girl, at some point she couldn't sleep in that same house and due to the trauma from the experience she only trusted her female guardian and myself. This was out of the books, but she had to spend some nights in my house until her female guardian was able to secure a new place away from the former house. In some of those nights while I supported these survivors, I will sit up and cry too thinking of the pain she is experiencing. I am a woman too living in this conflict-stricken region, experiencing the weights of fear of kidnappings, threats to live and even harassment. Having to navigate this complex situation and still be assaulted by someone you trust is an unimaginable pain.

In all this one thing gave me great joy, the support she had from the wife of this perpetrator, as she believed her and supported her. This gave the girl so much confidence cause in most cases wives will support their husbands and refuse to believe the victims. The support she had from the neighbor she reported to, the support from RuWCED, the health institutions and then the police. I learned something throughout this case, which is the power of community, how far a survivor can feel safe, or women and girls can be free from violence when they have the support of the immediate communities, especially in a conflict like ours, that is characterized by impunity. We would never have given her the needed support or even go as far as the police, counselling or health checks if the neighbor and her female guardian did not give her the needed support or were sensitized on where to report violence. This and many other stories have made me see how much role communities can play in combatting sexual and physical violence against women and girls in a community like ours that is also stricken by conflicts. We may not go to the police, but we do have other means to sensitize, report and get justice.

This project proposal therefore seeks to explore this community power in addressing the surge of conflict related sexual and physical violence against women and girls while also considering a survivor centered approach. This is to ensure that survivors are safe at all levels and keep in mind that the police and formal justice routes might not always be appropriate for survivors.

Chapter one gives an overview of physical and sexual violence against women and girls in Cameroon before and during the conflicts. Chapter two is more about the problem, focusing about sexual and physical violence in the conflict affected Northwest region of Cameroon. Chapter three focuses on the theories and chapters four to eight are all about the details of the project and it ends with chapter nine, the conclusion.

Executive Summary

Women and girls in Cameroon experience multiple forms of violence ranging from physical, sexual, emotional and economic violence. Violence against women and girls especially sexual and physical is a threat to women's lives and wellbeing and limits their bodily autonomy and confidence. Violence against women and girls have been existing in Cameroon over the years like other countries and there have been various measures ranging from civil society to government interventions to curb these ills.

The issue of violence against women and girls especially sexual and physical violence has exacerbated especially in the conflict affected Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon. It has been characterized by both impunity by the perpetrator and silence from the survivor and the community. This armed conflict has been characterized by gun violence between state armed groups and nonstate armed groups known as "separationists" fighters. This situation has led to heightened insecurity, closure of government owned justice institutions, schools especially in rural areas as they are targets of kidnappings, burn downs by nonstate armed groups. Women and girls have become more targets of sexual and physical violence by armed groups and civilian men because with the weakened justice systems, impunity and security concerns there is fear of threats to lives if the women report or speak up. The Northwest region, especially in the rural areas, has been characterized by many young girls moving to the urban areas as internally displaced people to work as domestic staff especially due to the shutdown of schools. Leaving their families and support networks, this exposes them even more to exploitation and sexual abuse with employers taking advantage of their vulnerabilities.

There are so many civil society organizations like Rural Women Center for Education and Development (RuWCED) who are working to address issues of gender-based violence and violence against women and girls in the Northwest region¹. These interventions have been contributing a great deal to support women and girls. What this project is doing differently is first understanding and utilizing the power of survivor centered and community-based

¹ Community Initiative for Sustainable Development (COMINSUD), Women in Action Against Gender Based Violence (WA Cameroon), Rescue Women Cameroon (REWOCAM), Association of the Welfare of Women and Indigenous People (ASOWWIP) and Medicin du Monde Suisse (MdM)

approaches in addressing violence in a region where there are weakened justice systems and heightened security concerns.

At the core of this project is the belief in the power of community and people to bring change and in this case, we're engaging local traditional leaders, bike riders who are mostly men and communities to get the needed support and safety for women and girls. In collaboration with RuWCED, these traditional leaders will be trained on using their localized laws to protect women and girls in their communities against sexual and physical violence. We're also leveraging the influence of bike riders and radio stations to carry out community sensitizations on sexual and physical violence. It doesn't just end there; we're also linking victims to the needed health and counselling services and connecting internally displaced girls to free vocational training programs for their economic empowerment. By this, it is also amplifying the services of these other organizations in this chain, and the work they do in broader support of women and girls. We also utilize local radio stations to sensitize communities on these forms of violence against women and girls, how to provide support and where to report. The radio programs will also be a channel of information on the existing vocational centers that will be shared.

This survivor centered and community-based approach is different and the best possible way to address these issues while ensuring the safety and security of women and girls. In a fragile state that is characterized by fear and threats to lives, getting the support of communities and working in collaboration with them will better address the issue of violence against women and girls. Through this intervention though not limited, we hope to engage at least 50 traditional leaders and the association of bike riders who are mostly men as champions of change and the protection of women and girls through workshop sessions and a demonstration march pass respectively. Through this intervention, we will also engage community members through fourteen radio sensitization programs on sexual and physical violence against women and girls.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The World Health Organization as recent as 2025 estimates that 1 in 3 women worldwide have experience sexual or physical violence in their lifetime (WHO, 2025). This is to shows that women and girls are constantly at risk of feeling unsafe their lifetime. As defined by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Violence against women and girls is “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (UNGA, 1993, p. 2). The experiences of women and girls are different when it comes to those living in conflict affected regions at risk of conflict related forms of violence. Conflict related violence can either be physical or sexual and as defined by the UN, “conflict-related sexual violence refers to rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, forced abortion, enforced sterilization, forced marriage and any other form of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is directly or indirectly linked to a conflict” (UN, 2020, p. 5). Physical violence on the other hand as defined by United Nations Women (2023) is an act attempting to or resulting in pain and/or physical injury. It includes but is not limited to beating, burning, kicking, punching, biting or any physical harm and at its most extreme, physical violence may lead to femicide (IASC, 2015). Some classifications also include trafficking (UN Women, 2023). Conflict related violence therefore is violence which is directly or indirectly influenced by conflict.

The UN security council in its 2025 briefing on conflict related sexual violence, it shared that there were more than 4,600 cases documented in 2024, which was a 25% increase from 2023 and 50% from 2022 and 92 of the verified cases were women and girls (UN Women, 2025). This shows her far conflict increases the violence perpetrated against women and girls. This work which is on conflict related sexual and physical violence against women and girls is focuses on the Northwest region of Cameroon. The Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon also known as the Anglophone regions has been experiencing an ongoing armed conflict since 2016. This crisis known as the “Anglophone Crisis” go back decades (Plan, 2024). It escalated in 2017 into armed conflicts, after peaceful protests of lawyers and teachers

against the marginalization of the English-speaking Northwest - Southwest. This is because the state used force and arms to dismantle the protests which then resulted in same backlash from non-state armed groups (NSAG). The situation quickly escalated to demands of secession leading to hostilities between non-state armed groups (NSAG) and government forces. It has now become an ongoing crisis characterized by violence, human rights abuses, displacement, kidnapping and a humanitarian emergency (Plan, 2024).

1.2 Sexual and Physical Violence in the Northwest Region Before 2016

Prior to the ongoing conflict in the Northwest region of Cameroon, just like every other country gender-based violence and violence against women and girls have been existing. There is very limited data on these cases of violence reported, however this is not to say that it wasn't happening. As to why this is the case, it is not quite clear, however government institutions like the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF) oversaw data for these cases as most cases were reported to them. Also, this data was usually shared with international organizations like UN Women.

The Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) program run by ICF International in collaboration with Institut National de la Statistique (INS) in 2011 show that in Cameroon more than half of women (55%) as from the age of 15 have experience physical violence mainly perpetrated by their current or most recent partners (INS & ICF International, 2012). The also showed that among women who had experienced marital violence, 43% of them had injuries because of the violence. In this same survey 20% of those who had already had sexual intercourse did so for their first time against their will, particularly those who had sexual intercourse before the age of 15 (INS & ICF International, 2012). This shows that it was not consented and as such rape. UN Women's Global Database on Violence against Women in various countries showed that for Cameroon, in 2012, reports 51% of reported intimate partner violence whether physical and/or sexual (UN Women, 2012). These statistics only show violence against women and girls in the whole country with limited direct data for the Northwest region however after the outbreak of the conflict, more attention was tilted to this region. Most monthly statistics of violence are now provided by OCHA, the coordinating body for humanitarian affairs in this region who started operating in this region based on the emergency context. Also, more international organizations are also working in this region to

address violence. This is not to say civil societies have not been operating prior but now there is a coordinating body that collaborates with these CSOs to make available data on the state of violence against women and girls.

1.3 Sexual and Physical Violence in the Northwest Region After 2016

Women and girls in the context of this conflict are affected by devastating practices like sexual and physical violence as seen in 2022, the United Nations FPA reported that in Cameroon, over half of married women experience intimate partner violence with significant rates of physical violence (34%) and sexual violence (13%) (UNFPA, 2022). In the first semester of 2023 Gender Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) incidents reported in the Northwest, Southwest and Far North region, 2386 cases were reported and 97.1% were females (UNFPA, 2023). UNFPA (2023) also indicated that 15.5% of these reported incidents were sexual violence which comprises of rape: 9.1% and sexual assault 6.5%. In this same incident report, physical assault accounted for 20.2%.

The ministry in charge of women's affairs explained that that complex security and humanitarian crisis in the Northwest region is exacerbating the vulnerability of women and girls exposing them to more violence (MINPROFF, 2025). In line with this Tazoacha et., al (2022) pointed out that there has been a drastic increase in the cases of sexual violence against women and girls in the conflict affected regions of Cameroon that is the Northwest region inclusive. This shows more cases of violence against women being reported especially with specifications on data for the Northwest region itself.

OCHA's situational report (2023) shared that GBV Area of responsibility (AoR) report of 2022 highlighted that Cameroon is characterized by gender inequalities deeply rooted in the socio-traditional and patriarchal norms like woman is property of her husband and should always be submissive. The crises in the Northwest and Southwest have led to the exacerbation of all forms and this has made the situation extremely worst for more women and girls (OCHA, 2023). Partner humanitarian organizations in their report of 1st to 30th September 2025, reported to have given mental health and psychosocial support services to 3,037 survivors (3,026 women and girls), 329 persons received legal assistance (214 women and girls), and 235 were referred for additional services (234 women and girls) (OCHA, 2025).

These figures go only as far as cases that get reported, the access to legal services is limited too with impunity and the weakened justice systems as well as long legal procedures which discourage victims of violence most times. Government owned institutions are one of the targets of non-state armed groups, there have been several kidnappings and killings of government officials in the conflict affected regions. This has forced most government officials who would have been in place of rendering justice to relocate and the doors of some of these institutions locked, others have even been burned down by these NSAGs. Even within this conflict, femicide is another issue that has been on the rise in Cameroon mostly by intimate partners. Recent updates from reports from the StopFemicides²³⁷ movement using media organs indicate that at least 219 women and girls have been killed in the country and these stats only go as far as cases that are reported. In 2025 for example, there was a case of femicide against where a certain Bekobe Eric pleaded guilty to killing his wife. However, the verdict of judge of the Douala Bonanjo High Court Judge Medou Dany is what shocked the whole nation. She gave the defendant five years suspended sentence which means he will not serve prison term unless he commits such act again within this time. Also, a fine of 52,000 FCFA (less than 100\$). Despite uproars against this verdict, nothing was done.

1.4 Sexual and Physical Violence and Displacement

The United Nations Secretary General (2024) report showed that women who are displaced, refugees or are migrant women and girls continue to face heightened levels of conflict related sexual violence. The conflict in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon have led to the displacement of people fleeing highly hit rural areas to urban communities and other regions as well. The displacement of people from their rural communities, especially to urban centers, exposes them to various forms of violence because of their exposure to more vulnerability being at the mercy of their hosts. In the UNFPA (2023) GBVIMS reports on incidents of violence, 45.5% of those who reported were internally displaced persons. The Norwegian Refugee Council (2025) ranked Cameroon top on the list of the world's most neglected displacement crisis of 2024, thereby making displaced persons especially women and girls vulnerable to the atrocities of physical and sexual violence.

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Cameroon over the period of the conflicts has provided data on the cases of violence and response, displacement and other humanitarian issues from organizations that belong to the

Gender Based Violence Cluster in the affected regions. As of September 2023, according to the Education Sector, 2,875 schools (41 per cent) out of 6,970 were still non-functional in the North-West and Southwest (NWSW) regions (OCHA, 2024) which have forced girls to move to urban areas in search of domestic care jobs to support their families. Also, in 2024 in Manyu division of the Southwest region, about 3,000 people were forced to flee their homes because of a wave of violence in February of that year (OCHA, 2024). Some houses were reportedly burned down by non-State armed groups (NSAGs) and state forces and armed clashes between these two escalated in Widikum subdivision in the Northwest leading to further displacements (OCHA, 2023). These lockdowns of schools came because of bans on schools, especially government owned schools by non-state armed groups. This has therefore forced many girls out of school and as internally displaced people (IDPs) some of these girls have resulted in domestic work as house helps, nannies to support their families. This has exposed them to exploitation, physical and sexual abuse, which is one of the issues addressed in this project.

1.5 Violence as an Instrument of Power

As explained by Merger (2015), violence operates as an instrument of power, whether to contest or enforce it. In the context of conflicts, economic and political inequalities are the material bases that fuel SGBV in conflict (Merger, 2015). According to Harvey (2023), gender violence, especially conflict related violence, operates in three forms. The first is a form of interpersonal violence, driven by individual motivations that is a masculine form of domination. Secondly it operates as a form of political violence, motivated through structural inequalities, and this case is quite glaring in the conflict affected Northwest region (Harvey, 2023). Third, it operates wherein violence provides the necessary conditions for what (Harvey, 2003) calls “accumulation by dispossession” (Merger, 2015, p. 418) as in this context gives men control over the bodies of women especially those forcefully displaced working under them. Merger (2015) also explains that with men losing their economic positions as providers in the context of conflicts, they turn to enforce that authority through violent acts against their women as a form of domination. Conflict related sexual and physical violence have been the reality of women and girls living in the conflict affected regions of Cameroon with emphasis on the NW region. This is indicative that women and girls are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence in situations of fragility and conflict (World Bank, 2011). In these conflict settings

whether by civilians or armed men, sexual and physical violence against women and girls are often used to dominate, to terrorize, and to humiliate people (World Bank, 2011).

Violence against women and girls in the Northwest region of Cameroon takes on these same traits being committed by a range of actors. A 2024 report authored by the Danish Refugee Council (2024) report identified these actors as civilians, government forces, non-state armed groups, separatist factions and militia (DRC, 2024). A break down in economic, social and political and judicial systems render women and men more vulnerable to sexual and physical violence. Men also experience violence but, in this case, it is different in nature mostly physical like arbitrary arrests and police brutality. Violence against women and girls in the context of the ongoing conflict is often met with impunity and silence. The weakened justice systems in the Northwest regions have led to many cases of violence going unreported and unaddressed. For fear of their lives and safety, many women and girls in the Northwest Region ill rather not report. The question is how you report someone who has a gun that is unaccounted for. I ask myself too like these women and girls, who protects you when you go back to your community after reporting. These perpetrators whether civilians, non-state armed groups or even the military live within the communities.

Sexual and Physical violence impacts beyond local communities as well—and addressing it becomes a national and international concern. The next sections will look at these.

1.6 Sexual/Physical Violence and SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set the agenda for global priorities in development between now and 2030. Universally, they call for a sustainable future, whereby all people enjoy equal rights, and poverty is a thing of the past (The Equality Institute, 2021). Goal 5 of the 17 SDGs aims at achieving Gender Equality, however sexual and physical violence against women and girls will limit this. VAWG is both a product, and a cause, of gender inequality and both mutually reinforce the other (The Equality Institute, 2021, p. 4). Gender inequality is the main driver and manifestation at the same time of VAWG across the world. Achieving gender equality is impossible without ending violence against women and girls, and vice versa. Therefore, tackling both gender inequality and VAWG will have mutually beneficial impacts. Goal 5 of the SDGs is aimed at achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls,

and target 5.2 specifically aims to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls (The Equality Institute, 2021). Sexual and physical violence does not only negatively impact the achievement of Goal 5 but other goals such as.

- Goal 4 Quality Education
- Goal 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth

According to The Equality Institute (2021), while achieving SDG 5 would arguably enable an acceleration on all SDGs, we won't achieve most (14) of the 17 SDGs unless we end VAWG globally.



Figure 1: VAWG and the SDGs

1.7 Sexual and Physical Violence and Human Rights

Sexual and physical violence is an unrelenting assault on human dignity, depriving people of their human rights. Freedom from violence is a fundamental human right, and gender-based violence undermines a person's sense of self-worth and self-esteem. It affects not only physical health but also mental health and may lead to self-harm, isolation, depression and suicidal attempts (Council of Hope, 2009). One of the most important international human rights documents dealing with women's rights is the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This Convention prohibits discrimination based on sex. It defines discrimination against women as: "Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, social, cultural, civil or any other field" (UN, 1979, p.2). Sexual violence, including rape, is one of the most significant aspects of discriminatory

violence against women. The realities of rape and sexual abuse in armed conflict and in peacetime have been documented extensively over time by several organizations. The right to equality, including equality before the law, are violated by such crimes and the impunity that the perpetrators enjoy in many cases (Amnesty International, 2011)

Sexual and physical violence against women and girls violates all the human rights of women. Women's rights are human rights too and violence hinders their rights starting from article 1 of human rights "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood" (UN, 2015, p. 4) to the very last article 30 which is about respecting all the 29 declarations "Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein" (UN, 2015, p. 62). It is therefore very primordial to address issues of sexual and physical violence against women and girls because doing so implies women and girls can exercise their human rights freely.

1.8 Sexual and Physical Violence and Gender Equality

Gender equality is, the equal valuing by society of the similarities and the differences of men and women, and the roles they play. It is based on women and men being full partners in the home, community and society. Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men and girls and boys are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups and that all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without the limitations set by stereotypes and prejudices about gender roles. Gender equality is a matter of human rights and is considered a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable people-centered development (UNICEF, 2017, p. 12). Sexual and physical violence against women is a major barrier to gender equality and act both therefore and driver of gender inequality. Violence against women and girls limit gender equality which in turn affects the achievement of all other goals of the vision 2030 SDGs. Condoning sexual and physical violence against women and girls whether in conflicts settings or not is promoting inequality. It limits women women's choices and freedom to develop their personal abilities and live fulfilled lives as do the men.

In addressing the surge in sexual and physical violence against women and girls, we will be engaging a 13months long project. This project takes on a survivor centered and community-based approach and connects normatively to various agreements Cameroon has signed onto in advancing the safety of women and girls. The sections below will look at these agreements.

1.9 Relevant Policies and Multilateral Agreements

There are several international, regional and state level initiatives in place that signpost the importance for protecting the security, economic, political, social, and reproductive lives of women and girls. Several of these policies and multilateral agreements has been ratified by the government of Cameroon to address of forms of violence against women and girls, and the country's penal codes have sanctions outlined for perpetrators of physical and sexual violence. In this section, I am focusing on:

- **The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)**

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) is an international document which lists the rights of all girls and women. It is an important agreement about equality between girls/women and boys/men. CEDAW (1979) says all discrimination against girls and women must end. In some parts of the world, girls and women are treated differently or unfairly because of being a girl or a woman, even though they have the same rights as boys and men. As a result of this discrimination, girls and women may not get a proper education and health care. Women may not be able to get jobs, vote or run for elections. Girls and women may also face various kinds of violence (UNICEF, 2025). CEDAW defines discrimination as against women as “any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field” (UN, 1979, p.2). With the idea of ending discrimination faced by all girls and women, the United Nations accepted CEDAW on 18 December 1979. As of 2025, 189countries have

ratified CEDAW. By ratification we mean the governments have agreed to do everything possible to guarantee the rights in CEDAW, including making them a part of their own laws (UNICEF, 2025)

Cameroon ratified this convention 1994 and has since incorporated the resolutions of the convention into its local constitutions (UN, 1999). In 2011, Cameroon submitted a national report (National Report) to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women that combines the fourth and fifth periodic reports on the implementation of CEDAW and covers the period from February 2009 to September 2011 (UN, 2012). In this report, there is information on legislative, judicial, administrative and other initiatives adopted by Cameroon regarding a wide range of topics involving women's rights. The Constitution of Cameroon specifically states that "[e]very person has a right to life, physical and moral integrity and to humane treatment in all circumstances" and that the state "shall ensure the equality of all citizens before the law." (Constitution of the Republic of Cameroon, 1996, Preamble). However, Cameroon is failing to protect women and girls in practice from rape, sexual assaults, physical harm and other harmful practices. The incorporation of the resolutions of CEDAW are more in paper than in actual principle and in the context of the conflict in the Northwest region, the case is worsened. This explains why I am resolving to using community-based efforts to address these issues

- **Maputo Protocol**

This was a groundbreaking African Union legal instrument guaranteeing comprehensive human rights for women including political, economic, social and reproductive rights. It mandates protection of women against sexual violence. While most countries have ratified or acceded to the Maputo Protocol, its implementation and application are still far from becoming a reality (Equality Now, 2021) and Cameroon is one of them. The Maputo Protocol was brought up by the African Union in 2003 and went into effect 2005 while signed by Cameroon on 25 July 2006, ratified on 13 September 2012 and the instrument of ratification was deposited on 28 December 2012 (Ndongo, 2023). Cameroon's constitution over time has been amended, the recent of which is 2016 criminalizing a range of forms of violence against women and girls. This is to reflect the provisions of the Maputo protocol.

- **Cameroon Penal Code**

The Cameroon Penal Code as of 2016, has various provisions that criminalizes various forms of sexual and physical violence against women and girls in the nation. Section 395, 396 and 397 criminalizes sexual assault and rape. This section of the law goes further to explain that even if there is marriage between the victim and offender, the prosecution will still hold. Imprisonment ranges from 15days to 2years for sexual indecency with fine of 10,000CFAF to 100,000CFAF and in the case of sexual assault the punishment is doubled. The punishment for rape will range between 5 to 10 years. Section 397 clearly states that the punishment for the offense will be doubled if the offender has authority over the victim, is a public servant, religious leader or is helped by one or more others (Cameroon Penal Code, 2016)

As for physical violence, there are provisions from section 278 to 281 containing punishments for offenders who cause physical harm to others through battery of any form. The punishments range from 6months to 20 years and life in imprisonment depending on the severity of the harm with financial obligations from 5000CFAF to 500,000frs. Physical harm is classified under Assault Occasioning Death, Assault Occasioning Grievous Harm, Simple Harm and Slight Harm (Cameroon Penal Code, 2016). The Cameroon penal code lacks a specific law for domestic violence, and it's persecuted under the general assault provisions mentioned above. There isn't enough data to even prove the number of cases that were successfully persecuted especially those that were reported.

- **1325 Women Peace and Security Agenda and Cameroon's National Action Plans (NAPS)**

The Women Peace and Security (WPS) resolution was adopted by the Security Council in the year 2000 (UN, 2000). The WPS Agenda is commonly seen as consisting of four pillars – participation, prevention, protection and relief and recovery (Castaneda & Myrtilinen, 2022) In this work I am more concerned with the prevention and protection pillar. As explained by Lopez Narrow interpretations focus on gender-based violence (GBV) prevention and protection only, and on CRSV, while broader ones interpret the pillars as

pertaining to the prevention of/protection from violence more generally as well as the protection of women's and girls' human rights. In UNSCR 1325, prevention is mentioned thrice – and always as in the context of the prevention of conflict more broadly. Protection is mentioned seven times, four times in the context of the protection of women and girls in general, once with a specific mention of protection from all forms GBV and sexual violence, and twice as protection of women's human rights (Castaneda & Myrntinen, 2022). Focusing on prevention is about ensuring that conflict is prevented and all forms of violence against women and girls while protection is on ensuring women and girls are protected from all forms of sexual and gender-based violence in conflict settings (UN, 2000).

In 2017, Cameroon drafted its first National Action Plans which ran between 2018- to meet obligations contained in the UNSC. In 2023 a second NAP was adopted which covers the period of 2023-2027 (WILPF, 2024). The Women International league for Peace & Freedom (WILPF Cameroon) oversees monitoring the progress of the NAPS in Cameroon.

Generally, Cameroon has ratified these multilateral conventions mentioned above and more and have incorporated it within her laws. However, in principle they are not as effective as decorated in the laws. People in authority, security agents, civilians, men especially assault women and girls daily but little is done to address these issues when they are reported as it is met with a lot of impunity. The conflict in the Northwest regions has worsened the case for women and girls as their pleas are often met with silence and impunity by the state and communities. Government security officers who are supposed to use their power to protect women and girls are amongst those violating their rights. Young girls working in households have become the punching backs of wives and the sexually violated by the male employers, that is the husbands. There is so much in talk but so little in practice.

So, while these declarations and national commitments remain vital, until they are more robust, my community centered intervention attempts to address this existing judicial and security gap.

All this leaves me with the option than engaging a survivor centered and community-based approach to addressing issues of violence against women and girls is the best option in a society where the justice system is failing woefully as the justice system at present do not give women justice.

2.0 Project Justification

2.1 Problem Analysis

Since 2016, the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon have been engulfed in a protracted armed conflict between separatist forces and government security actors. This humanitarian crisis has not only displaced thousands but has also dramatically escalated gender-based violence, with women and girls bearing the brunt of its most harrowing consequences (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs [OCHA], 2023). As mentioned in the literature reviews in Chapter one, the conflict in the Northwest region has led to school close downs, halted livelihoods so much so that women and girls are forced to move to different forms of employment. Some of which include domestic care work which also exposes them to violence.

This project seeks to confront the following deeply rooted and pressing problems:

A Surge in Conflict-Related Sexual and Physical Violence: According Amnesty International (2020), the Northwest region in the context of the ongoing conflicts has witnessed a disturbing rise in sexual and physical violence against women and girls, fueled by lawlessness, fear, and impunity. Rape, sexual assault, beatings, and other forms of abuse have also become tragically normalized in many communities (Human Rights Watch, 2023).

Systematic Violations by Armed Actors: Both state forces and separatist fighters have been implicated in widespread and systematic violations of the rights of women and girls, including rape, physical assault, sexual harassment, and degrading treatment, often committed with little to no accountability (Amnesty International, 2020; Human Rights Watch, 2022). Civilians are not left out in the list of offenders.

Urban Exploitation of Displaced Girls: Conflict-induced displacement has forced thousands of young girls to flee rural conflict zones into urban centers (OCHA, 2023). In these new environments, many are exposed to exploitative labor conditions, sexual violence, and psychological abuse, compounded by fear of retaliation, stigma, and limited access to protection services (UN Women, 2020).

Erosion of Justice and Protection Mechanisms: The fragile justice infrastructure in the Northwest region has been severely weakened by the ongoing conflict (International Crisis Group, 2017). Survivors face immense barriers to accessing legal redress or protection, as courts are non-functional in many areas and law enforcement structures are either absent or ineffective (Human Rights Watch, 2022).

Way Forward

Conflict is clearly complicated and solutions that provide safety and security for women include short- and long-term changes/commitments at various levels of community and state. This project is concerned about making an intervention to improve the lives of girls and women at the local community level. Currently missing in support and safety for women are 1) a stronger community leadership that addresses the violence against women as not natural or normal or inevitable 2) local and community based protective mechanisms for women and girls in a fragile society where the justice system does not quite provide them with that protection and 3) support for men to reform violent behavior towards women and girls as not natural, but problematic. It is in line with these key gaps that this project seeks to address the issue of weakening justice system, impunity and silence, displacement that forces girls into domestic care work and subsequently violence. In more general terms the general surge of sexual and physical violence against women girls perpetrated by armed and civilian men.

This project proposal therefore seeks to use a survivor centered community-based approach to address the issues of sexual and physical violence faced by women and girls in the Northwest region of Cameroon. Most interventions are either focused solely on survivors or potential perpetrators, but this approach incorporates both. This holistic approach seeks to make communities advocates and accountable so that when survivors report cases of violence they are certain of protection and support in the community.

With attacks on state institutions and fear of being tagged a government supporter, using traditional leaders to enforce justice will go a long way to protect women and girls in the Northwest Region. Traditional councils are recognized in Cameroon with the presence of what we call House of Chiefs. These traditional rulers have councils and control various villages or what one will call communities and are the first bodies of authority in communities before government bodies. This project therefore seeks to work with these traditional leaders and

their councils who have the power to drive change in their communities through incorporating in their local laws, protective frameworks that frown against violence against women and girls and educational sessions with men in the communities to change behaviors. These traditional councils though dominated by men also have women representatives who can better present the challenges of women and girls and experiences of sexual and physical violence. The men in this councils when fully engaged will play a crucial role in educating other men and enforce justice in keeping with their traditional laws and power. Also, these traditional authorities are highly respected by their communities and that is inclusive of men too whether civilian, non-state or state armed men.

The project will also use local media campaigns to raise awareness on sexual and physical violence against women in the conflict affected Northwest Region. This will be done in two ways, first through radio media sensitization talks and awareness. Secondly, through a sensitization session with bike riders and a demonstration march pass with these riders. In the Northwest region of Cameroon, especially in Bamenda, bike riders are a very strategic population and mostly men. They vary from single and married men. This set of people are strategic because, every issue that concerns commercial bike riders in the Northwest region, always leaves a statement and presence and since it is dominated by men, I think there is no better way to reach more men than targeting bike riders. They do have a union which makes it easier to work with them.

As earlier mentioned, the conflicts have led to displacement of many people especially women and girls and they have been engaged in domestic care work which has exposed some of them to sexual and physical exploitation by their host. Apart from the sensitizations and connection to various psychosocial and legal support services, this project will also try to connect some of these girls to other sources that can generate income and independence. This will be done by connecting them to the Rural Women Center for Education's (RuWCED) vocational centers, my implementing organization. This vocational center is free and provides training and certificates that are nationally recognized, making them employable and providing employment for others.

This holistic approach will also involve partnering with local CSOs working to address the issues of violence against women and girls. This will include engaging them as resource people during the radio sensitizations programs and to enhance referral pathways where

survivors can report violence. This is also to ensure that they not only report but receive the necessary psychosocial, health, legal and why not economic response and support

2.2 Theoretical Frameworks

The theories used in this project to better explain and understand the issues are feminist theory of gender in/around patriarchy and conflict, social theory and the theory of change. This is because violence against women and girls in the Northwest region is first deeply rooted in patriarchal systems of power and now even more complicated with the ongoing armed conflict. Addressing these deeply rooted problems requires approaches that are attuned to the nature of gender violence and (lack of) reporting and support systems. The feminist theory on patriarchy and conflict, social theory and theory of change to better understand the situation of the Northwest region of Cameroon.

Feminist Theory

Feminist theory aims to understand the nature of gender inequality by examining social roles, experiences and power structure. Feminism can also be seen as a social and political movement that aims to advance gender equality and challenge the patriarchal power structures that marginalize and oppress women (Bhandari, 2024). There are several feminist theories to understand the situation of women and for this project, I am focusing on the feminist theory of gender around patriarchy and conflict. The Northwest region where this project will be implemented is a deeply patriarchal system and at the same time witnessing an ongoing conflict. The experiences of women when it comes to violence in these circumstances are in several fronts.

Patriarchy as a logic and framework divides and values women and men in separate space like women remain private and men remain public that is women become possessions of male property. In Baehr's (n.d.) review of Cynthia Enloe's book *"The Big Push: Exposing and Challenging the Persistence of Patriarchy"* she shares how Enloe describes patriarchal systems as "webs of beliefs, values and relationships" (Enloe, 2017, p. 21). In the case of the Northwest region, deeply rooted in patriarchy, these beliefs include but not limited to, men's ownership of women, women as second to men, control over a woman's autonomy and women not speaking up against their partners. In this review, Baehr shares that in Enloe's book she raises awareness on the fact patriarchy itself is "human made" and it is "vulnerable to challenge"

(Enloe, 2017, p. 160). This is to say in the context of the Northwest region where this project will be carried out, men can be used as agents to change and advocate for women. It is not about changing their cultures which that is quite hard but using that authority they believe to have over women as a protective power not a cause of harm.

In a conversation between three feminists; Giti Chandra, Cynthia Enloe and Irma Erlingsdóttir “In Feminist Conversation on Peace” (2022) Bristol University Press, these feminists examined how patriarchy also undermines women’s rights. Patriarchy not only fosters gender equality but also the atmosphere of violence. As Irma Erlingsdóttir puts it; “For women and non-cis male identifying genders, peace from patriarchy is not an option in today’s society and culture, whether in war or in peacetime” (Erlingsdóttir, 2022, pg. 79). Indeed, as feminist and women’s rights activists we call dream peace from patriarchy (Enloe, 2022). It is with this feminist understanding of patriarchy that we can see how patriarchal leaders can use their powers not to subject women but to support and protect them especially in conflict times like the case of the Northwest region of Cameroon.

Patriarchy does not end with these beliefs and control only but enables more violence on women’s bodies. In the same feminist conversation with the three feminists, they clearly explain from a feminist perspective how war and conflict affect women. From the conversation, we understand women are always at war. This is to say, in a woman’s lifetime she always experiences violence, what then becomes the case when it is in a time of armed conflict. Giti Chandra, in responding to Cynthia Enloe expresses “that we think of wartime and peacetime as two separate things, but the connecting link here is the always-present violence against women” (Chanda, 2022, pg77). This shows that there is always violence present in the lives of women whether sexual, physical or emotional and conflict times makes the situation worst. Irma Erlingsdóttir’s assessment goes further to assert this point “that this simple opposition between wartime and peacetime conditions is not helpful when discussing security for women; the constant threat of violence, which women experience, shows that it makes no sense to make such a distinction. “Women’s testimonies of violence provide ample evidence that war and peace are entangled – that they collapse into each other – and that women feel the constant need to navigate and negotiate between the two” (Erlingsdóttir, 2022, pg. 78). And that’s why Cynthia Enloe in this conversation required that we must always

pose the feminist question of “In any woman’s life, when does the last war actually end?” (Enloe, 2022, pg. 79).

Afro feminism understanding of patriarchy, power, violence advances and nuances the arguments raised in this section. Just like in Tamale’s Afro feminism contribution to knowledge around conflict and reconciliation, much of what she is saying is using community elders as opposed to liberal (colonial) rights-based approach (Tamale, 2020). The broader claim that Afro-feminism isn't just about patriarchy but how patriarchy is layered/intersects with nationalism, ethnicity, religion, rural/urban and this shows how useful of a tool it can be in the context of the conflict affected Northwest region of Cameroon (Tamale, 2020). This is about understanding that this region is deeply patriarchal in nature, affected by conflict and all these together affect women negatively but finding ways that community leaders and in the Cameroon context traditional leaders can use that same power to influence change in the experiences of women and girls when it comes to sexual and physical violence.

Social Theory

Feminist theory explains patriarchy as a social force that organize men and women and place value on them different. Social theory, alternatively, extends this by analyzing the reasons for these human actions and how their environments shape their beliefs and actions.

Social theory addresses the social context of human actions, arguing that the ways in which we act and our beliefs are generated partly by social structure but also in communication between individuals and in social groups (Willis et al., 2007). Social theory gives us a range of tools for understanding social life and in the case of this project the patriarchal context and conflict settings have influenced the actions and experiences of men and women alike such as men becoming more violent with impunity and women experiencing more of this violence. Based on the above-mentioned definition of social theory, I argue that men in the Northwest region will act partly by the structure of this region and their interactions with other men or social groups in the region. For example, with the fragile state there is impunity which gives the possibility for men to be violent without fear of justice. Also being part of certain armed groups, seeing what other group members do and having access to power attunes to using that power against women and girls.

The Northwest region is a deeply patriarchal region which believes in men being in control over the households, their wives and everyone else. Women and girls come second, and her identity is only in her husband's house or being obedient to a man. Patriarchy doesn't just affect women and girls only; it does the same for men. Based on this structure, the men have grown to believe that any women in their lives must be under them and the pressure to maintain this status quo and power sometimes emanates to violence. The conflicts have worsened the situation of things. Where the economic situation has drastically affected some men who were sole providers and now cannot maintain this power because in patriarchal context, they are the providers and whoever provides has power. In these circumstances they believe violence like battery, forceful sexual will help maintain their power. Just like Meger says in the case of conflict " Sexual violence in conflict may, and often does, satisfy the individual and sociocultural drives articulated in existing literature regarding men's desire to overpower, to harm, to subjugate another, and to fulfill socially defined expectations of what it means to be a man" (Meger, 2016, p.47).

The situation has worsened also with the ongoing conflicts because the violence structure and broken justice systems have made most violent men to go about their atrocities. Some civilians, others armed men sexually and physically harass women and girls because they believe for fear of threats of lives these victims won't report and even if they do very little will be done. Also, the context of the conflicts has displaced people, especially young IDP girls who cannot afford private education have resulted in domestic care jobs. The power dynamics make employers feel they have more power and so violate these workers. These girls are exposed to sexual abuse from mostly their male employers and physical abuse from them female employers who use battery and force to maintain their power.

The approach of this project, through applying a feminist social theory of patriarchy and conflict, therefore is breakdown those negative behaviors aimed at always subjugating women. It also focuses on engaging traditional heads and bike riders who are mostly men to enforce localized protection mechanisms, change behaviors and become actors of ensuring that women and girls are protected in these circumstances.

Theory of Change (TOC)

Given the gravity of the issue and the well documented enduring practices of patriarchy and violence against women across time, context and space, how might we theorize about change? Here this project draws heavily upon the theory of change. At its heart, Theory of Change (ToC) spells out initiative or program logic. It is about identifying the goals and ways that are geared towards achieving these goals. According to Taplin et al., (2013) the identified changes are mapped graphically in causal pathways of outcomes, showing each outcome in logical relationship to all the others. Interventions, which are activities and outputs of any sort, are mapped to the outcomes pathway to show what stakeholders think it will take to effect the changes, and when. Theory of Change provides a working model against which to test hypotheses and assumptions about what actions will best bring about the intended outcomes. A given ToC also identifies measurable indicators of success as a roadmap to monitoring and evaluation (Taplin et al., 2013).

An important assumption of the ToC approach is that the involvement of stakeholders will extend ownership of the intervention, assist its implementation and support evaluation (Sullivan et al, 2006). From this it can be deduced that stakeholders are those with a primary interest in the health and well-being of the neighborhood. They may not be of the neighborhood but do need to be committed to making change at all levels that can impact on it. According to the Aspen Round Table, potential stakeholders include staff, governors and directors, funders, technical assistance providers, residents, local business owners, civic leaders, representatives of community-based organizations and public, private and nonprofit organizations (Aspen Institute, 1997). In my case they would be the traditional councils, strategic stakeholders like commercial bike riders, CSOs as well as community members. ToC is both a process and a product and for this project, the ToC is clearly outlined in the subsequent paragraphs.

This project aims to create a transformative environment in the conflict ravaged Northwest region, where women and girls can live lives free from the pervasive scourge of physical and sexual violence. I understand that I cannot solve the ongoing conflicts, displacements or rebuilding justice systems which are macro problems. However, focusing on localized measures will contribute to ensure that women and girls are free from sexual and physical violence in the conflict settings. In my case therefore, change will mean utilizing traditional courts and councils to uphold the rights of women, women and girls being able to

freely report violence knowing they won't face backlash from community, men involved in activism work on protecting women and changing behaviors. This is vital when formal justice routes appear to not be available to survivors for a multitude of reasons detailed above.

This project first engages local traditional rulers who have some level of authority now in decision making. The educational meetings on sexual and physical violence with these traditional leaders will lead to the first short term outcome which is, traditional councils engaged in championing and defending women's rights and establish localized protection laws. This will be achieved through the educational and sensitization sessions. To evaluate that they truly have become champions, they're expected to carry out sensitizations during their village meetings on violence and women's rights and protections. We will be working with them to follow up and support during these community meetings and gatherings.

The second outcome will be commercial bike riders and community members change behaviors, recognize, report and act against sexual and physical violence. This will be possible after the engagement meeting with these bike riders and the demonstration march pass which will raise awareness. This will be done by engaging with their union. A survey will be carried out before with the bike riders before and after the sensitization to evaluate change in behavior or at least perceptions on sexual and physical violence against women and girls.

Radio sensitizations on existing free vocational services and referral patterns for reporting abuse will be held using a community radio station that covers the area of this project. The hope for this is, internally displaced young girls who are domestic workers experiencing will report and register with RuWCED free vocational training centers. This will be measured through new intakes into the vocational center through contacts provided on the radio. This data will during registration will also consider previous work of the girls registering that way we can trace those from previous exploitative domestic work settings.

The assumption in all these is that the traditional rulers implement what they learned during the engagement meetings in their communities and the sensitizations through radio and the demonstration march pass will change behaviors of the men and communities. Also, survivors will report cases and stakeholder organizations will respond. The hope is also that girls and women too as stakeholders will change in that they will start to hopefully believe

that reporting may lead to justice. And as a hope for empowerment, those in domestic care workspaces that are abusive will register and join the vocational training programs.

The possible risks involved is backlash from men in the community, unwilling to change behaviors especially. Challenges may also occur in some cases where the perpetrator is affiliated with an armed group whether the non-state or state armed group. Even though traditional rulers have authority in their communities and most NSAG are members of the communities there are situations where some fighters left their community and settled in others. Also, a risk on women not wanting to engage because they don't believe it will help them

The possible mitigation strategy is clear sensitization on the need to end these atrocities. In cases where an armed perpetrator may threaten traditional authorities, there is very little to be done. It would be easy to say they can report to the police, but the question is who protects the survivor when they go back to the community against the NSAG.

2.3 Gender Approach Used

Gender transformative approach

Since this project is feminist and seeks to empower communities and women and girls for the advancement of their own safety, the project adopts a gender transformative approach. The term gender transformative is predominantly used to identify programmatic efforts to end GBV-related (Casey et al., 2016). Gender-transformative approaches aim to move beyond individual self-improvement among women and toward transforming the power dynamics and structures that serve to reinforce gendered inequalities (Hillenbrand et al., 2015). As defined by the CGIAR Research Program on Aquatic Agricultural Systems (AAS), a gender-transformative approach to development goes beyond the “symptoms” of gender inequality to address “the social norms, attitudes, behaviors, and social systems that underlie them” (AAS 2012, p. 3). As mentioned by the UNFPA, a gender-transformative approach is a way of working that should be considered for any intervention or programme. Even where gender does not appear to be an issue, it has the potential to be. Accordingly, development efforts should generally consider applying gender-transformative approaches even when improving gender equality is not the main objective of a programme (UNFPA, 2023). This approach entails engaging groups in critically examining, challenging and questioning gender norms and

power relations (Rottach et al., 2009) that underline visible gender gaps. In this case, sexual and physical violence against women and girls limit gender equality and to better understand this we've used the feminist understanding of patriarchy and conflict, and the social theory to evaluate why these forms of violence persist. And address this issue, this project engages traditional councils mostly made up of men and works with commercial bike riders who are mostly men to change behaviors and be fully engaged in protecting women and girls' rights in the context of the conflict.

In brief, globally, the majority of intimate partner and sexual violence resulting in serious injury or other psychological or economic consequences is perpetrated by men (Casey et al., 2016). Furthermore, men's use of violence in their heterosexual relationships is consistently associated with adherence to traditional notions of masculinity that emphasize dominance over and hostility toward women (Flood & Pease, 2009). In ensuring women get the necessary healing and justice in the Northwest region, engaging men helps make them not just the perpetrators but also partners in ending the cycle. This by no means imply that men who have engaged in this harmful act should not be held accountable, however it gives more support to the women and in communities, family levels as other men will support in ensuring the women get the needed justice

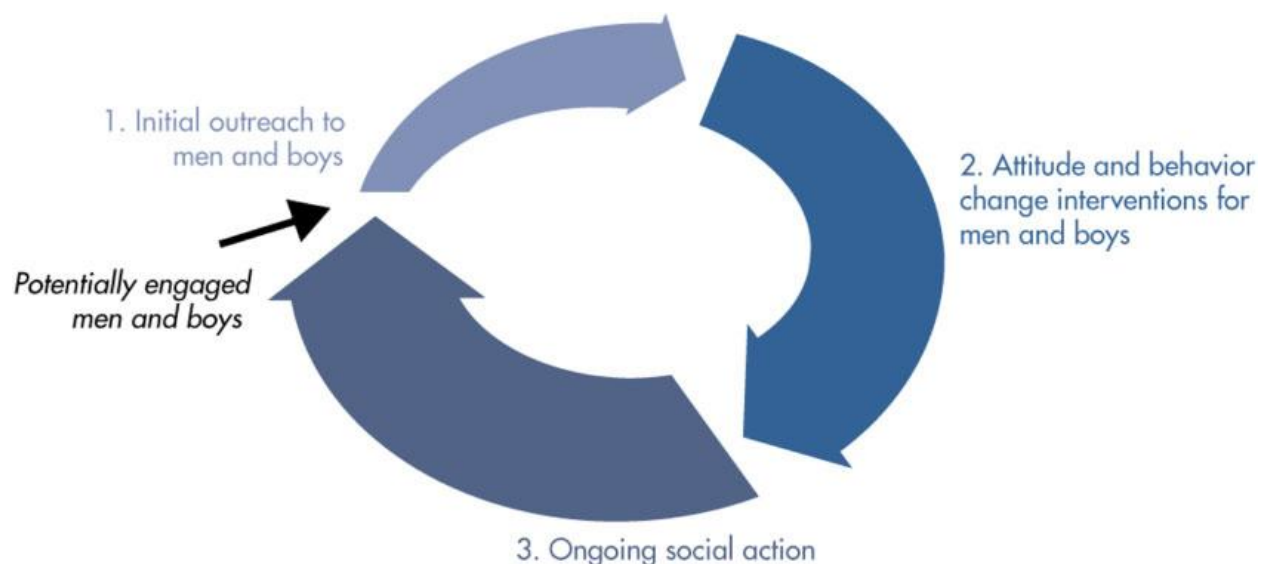


Figure 2: Domains of men's engagement in gender-based violence prevention: A conceptual model (Casey et al., 2016)

2.4 Capacity to Implement the Project

This section will highlight my organization's capacity which is my implementing partner. It will highlight other projects that have previously been implemented by RuWCED. This section will also outline my capacity as project leader in implementing this project.

Organizational Capacity

The implementing partner for this project is the Rural Women Center for Education and Development (RuWCED, Cameroon). RuWCED is a nationally accredited organization with its grounding more in the Northwest region of Cameroon. RuWCED has been in existence since 2008 and was founded grounded on the desire by the founder to support the sexual reproductive health and rights of women and girls and fight GBV. RuWCED has as mission using rights-based and community based approaches to development to promote women/girls health, education, human rights and livelihoods in inclusive and environmentally conscious and friendly ways with a recognition of the importance of the intersection of multiple inequalities based on the intersection of different positions that women and girls hold in relation to gender, ethnicity, class, and other social categories.

RuWCED over the years have implemented diverse programs and projects aimed at addressing sexual and physical violence against women and girls and GBV. RuWCED's programs over time have involved school sensitizations, community outreaches and in religious settings. Some of the projects RuWCED has implemented on violence was a United Nation Trust Funded (UNTF) project on Violence against women and girls in the conflict affected Ngoketunjia Division of Cameroon. RuWCED also holds weekly radio programs on women's health and GBV and this will be leverage for the radio sensitizations. RuWCED also owns a vocational training institute known as Vocational Training Institute for Rural Women for Education and Development (VTIRuWED). This center has two locations in the NW region and has graduated several vulnerable women and girls over the years. It has various departments ranging from Tailoring and Fashion Designing, Computer and Secretariat Duties, Agriculture, Civil Engineering, Saloon and Beauty and Catering and Cooking. These training centers are free of charge for beneficiaries with the vulnerability criteria and priority is given to women and girls. With this, internally displaced urban girls experience violence in their domestic works space who cannot afford training or schooling will benefit from this center.

RuWCED overtime has also created links with traditional leaders and councils and worked with them in addressing issues of violence against women and girls in their communities. This is going to serve as an entrance point to take the work further.

The organization also pledged to co-fund this project and sought government agencies, development partners and international organizations focused on women's rights. This is possible with the organization's track record of successfully managing donor funds, executing multi-year projects, and securing financial backing from both local and international donors.

RuWCED also boasts a highly trained Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team, which ensures that interventions are evidence based, continuously monitored and adaptively managed. This team has been supportive in the design of this project and will continue monitoring the implementation. This ensures that the interventions achieve the desired outcomes.

RuWCED's capacity isn't just at implementation of projects, sourcing fundings but also ensures proper monitoring and evaluation of the interventions.

2.5 Individual Capacity

I am a GBV activist who believes in protecting women and girls against all forms of violence that limits their human rights and full development of their potentials. In my role as the Community Engagement and Theater Oppressed Officer, since 2021, after volunteering with RuWCED from 2019 to 2020, I have been forefront of sensitization and advocacy efforts on Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV), Gender Equality, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), and Menstrual Hygiene. I oversee building and sustaining relationships with community leaders especially local traditional leaders and women group networks in addressing issues of VAWG and women's rights. I also ensure the effective operation of RuWCED's counseling centers across 13 villages in Ngoketunjia, where survivors of violence receive psychosocial, health, and economic empowerment services.

As Theatre of the Oppressed Officer, I develop and stages powerful theatre performances at community events, fostering dialogue and challenging harmful social norms. Through this medium, I have been able to engage communities in difficult conversations around gender-based violence and promote behavioral change. Building upon this, I will be

able to conduct the engagement meetings with the various stakeholder groups especially with the uncomfortable conversations on sexual and physical violence against women and girls which is avoided. How the complacent behavior of communities, men who would say they are not violent or even institutions of power like the traditional councils upholds or promotes the occurrence of violence against women and girls in the communities. This is especially as conflict is looked at as the broader problem, trivializing what women and girls experience within the conflicts.

Through my work in communities, I have been able to build community ties, and this positioned me as a trusted resource for survivors of conflict-related sexual violence, particularly in the wake of the ongoing Anglophone conflict. Over time I have played a crucial role in identifying, supporting, and referring survivors to appropriate services, ensuring their protection and access to justice.

In addition to my current roles, I served as Project Assistant for the RuWCED's UN Trust Fund project on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) in conflict-affected Ngoketunjia Division. And presently the Project Field Assistant for RuWCED's FIFA-funded initiative, where sports is used as a vehicle for peacebuilding, social cohesion, and the promotion of women's and girls' rights in the Northwest region of Cameroon. I also manage our renewable energy project which engages women in this sector. My experience in managing and providing support for women and girls focused projects, managing budgets, staff and monitoring change has provided me with the capacity needed for the running of this project.

My academic background in Communication and Development has also built my communication skills in engaging communities and carrying out sensitization including radio programs. All this will play a great role in ensuring the success of the project as the project's lead.

2.6 Collaboration with other Stakeholders and Actors in the Field

The project will collaborate with a range of stakeholders from different institutions leveraging RuWCED's links with these organizations. I will be working with different traditional councils in the Northwest region. I will be working with traditional rulers mostly in the Ngoketunjia and Mezam Divisions in the Northwest region of Cameroon. RuWCED has had some links with

traditional heads in mostly Ngoketunjia Division. This project will engage them and create links with those in Mezam Division. This is to engage in meetings that will encompass education on sexual and physical violence and using their position and power to develop protection laws to protect the women and girls in their communities. As a woman who was raised in a rural community and most part of her work happens in these communities, I am leveraging on this to engage with these leaders. In each of these communities that traditional leaders will be engaged, we will have key gatekeeper traditional leader (woman and man) who can vouch for us as well. It is worth noting that we're working in communities that RuWCED already have links with such people and we're leveraging on that.

The project will also collaborate with the Association of Bike Riders in the Bamenda city, Northwest Region for the demonstration march pass to sensitize communities of sexual and physical violence and advocating for the rights and protection of women and girls. This association is made up of majorly men, and this holds them accountable and as partners. We will engage with the president of this association to facilitate access to the bike riders and organization of the sensitization and march pass.

We will also be partnering with Abakwa Radio station, a local radio station in the Northwest region. This is a private radio station and easily accessible for audience. Engaging with this radio station makes it easier to connect with audiences and reach communities than the government owned stations. This is to ensure that interventions are not misunderstood as pro government especially in the context of the conflict. RuWCED has also been collaborating with this station for its radio programs, which makes it even more possible. These radio programs will be more sustained educational sessions rather than just short marketing style messages.

This project will also leverage with RuWCED collaboration with various CSOs, Hospitals and police departments in the Northwest regions. RuWCED is part of the GBV Cluster, and this project will take advantage of that to engage with other CSOs in this body working in SGBV interventions. This will enable referral for various services needed by survivors ranging from psychosocial, health, legal as well as empowerment. Some of the partners which will be engaged though this list is not exhaustive are Medicin du Monde (MdM Suisse), Community Initiative for Sustainable Development (COMINSUD), Women in Action Cameroon (WAC), the Bamenda Regional Hospital, Ndop District Hospital, and Bamenda Central Police.

3.0 Project Framework

3.1 Project Goal

The overall aim of the project is to take concrete community engagement steps to create a transformative environment in the conflict ravaged Northwest region, where women and girls can live lives free from the pervasive scourge of physical and sexual violence.

3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this project are:

- To strengthen community-based prevention and protection mechanisms against sexual and physical violence by engaging 50 traditional leaders in the Northwest region to adopt and promote localized protective measures.
- To transform harmful gender norms and promote male accountability by engaging community members in fourteen radio awareness campaigns, and commercial bike riders' association in public demonstration pass advocating for the protection of women and girls.
- To increase access to reporting and referral pathways for survivors of sexual and physical violence through community radio sensitization and strengthened collaboration with CSOs, health institutions, and traditional authorities.
- To enhance the protection and economic resilience of internally displaced girls working as domestic workers by facilitating access to free vocational training and empowerment upskilling them from domestic care work.

3.2.1 Project Outcomes and Outputs

Outcome 1: Traditional councils actively champion and enforce localized protection measures for women and girls through localized laws enforcing justice as well as sensitizations.

Output 1: Five engagement workshop meetings conducted with 50 traditional leaders in target divisions.

Outcome 2: Commercial bike riders and community members change behaviors, recognize, report and act against sexual and physical violence.

Output 2: One engagement meeting and one demonstration march conducted with commercial bike riders from the Association of Bike Riders and fourteen Radio programs.

Outcome 3: Displaced female domestic workers report exploitation and abuse and register with free vocational training centers

Output 3: Fourteen Radio sensitizations on sexual and physical violence, referral pathways to report violence and existing free vocational services for economic empowerment.

3.3 Project Principles

This project will be guided by several principles

- Adopting a survivor-centered approach in that services will be offered based on the survivors' desires and their protection and safety will be of top importance in any intervention. Confidentiality is key as well. The engagement sessions with the CSOs, traditional authorities and bike riders will educate these stakeholders on confidentiality in reporting and responding to survivors.
- We don't want to cause more harm to survivors while trying to support them. So, one of the guiding principles is the Do No Harm principle. While calling on survivors to report, helping them get justice, we're also conscious of their safety especially in the conflict setting where we find ourselves.
- I understand that I am working in a conflict setting with its many complexities and complications. As such, every intervention will be conflict sensitive, not expressing fear but cautiousness. Ensuring the safety of participants and administration of the project. The rule will always be "Safety First".
- This project is guided by a gender transformative approach where men and boys are involved and engaged in the fight against sexual and physical violence against women and girls. Men will be engaged at every step of the way, and this is done mostly in advocacy, speaking up and supporting survivor voices in a way that does not decenter women led approach.
- The project will also be guided by inclusivity. This is to say women and girls whether person's living with disabilities, from indigenous groups, internally

displaced or from all social class will be the target of this project. No woman or girl will be excluded based on their intersectionality.

- It will also be guided by community ownership. This is making the project a community's thing, so that communities do not feel like passive members but active stakeholders in the project's implementation, success and sustainability. The community in this case is every man, woman, boy, girl in the communities where women and girls face threats of sexual/physical violence.

4.0 Target Group

4.1 Description of Project Site

This project will be carried out in the Northwest region, which is my implementing organization's main base. RuWCED Cameroon although a nationally accredited non-profit society organization with interventions in all ten regions of the nation has most of its interventions in the conflict stricken Northwest region. As I have explained throughout this work with various reviewed literature, the Northwest region is one of the two English speaking regions of Cameroon and have been experiencing an ongoing armed conflict from 2016. This crisis, also known as the Anglophone Crisis, is a sociopolitical crisis that turned to armed confrontations between the state military and separatist fighters. Just like any other conflict settings, civilians turn to feel the brunt of the conflicts more especially women, girls and children.

In terms of its geographical location, the Northwest region is in the western highlands of Cameroon and mostly dominated by agricultural activities. The most recent statistics provided by the office in charge of statistics Bureau Central des Recensements et des Etudes de Population, Institut National de la Statistique Cameroun (2025) showed this region's population size at 2,428,200 people. In terms of the statistics on the population size of specific towns and villages in this region, the last statistic on this is 2005, way before the conflicts started. Accessibility within towns and villages in this region includes taxis, small buses and bikes. Mostly bikes access villages and certain communities because of the poor nature of roads.

The Northwest region is made up of several Divisions and subdivisions and as such, this project will be focused on two Divisions with immediate interventions in specific subdivisions. The main project sites are the Mezam and Ngoketunjia Divisions. These Divisions are one of those that have been highly hit by the conflict with some divisions within them also being an entry point for internally displaced people within the region. In Ngoketunjia Division, the project will focus on the Ndop, and Babessi subdivision and in Mezam it will take place in the Bamenda municipality (Bamenda I, II, III). These divisions are made of what we call villages, and they are headed by traditional chiefs who have their traditional councils heading various communities within the villages. Due to the ongoing conflicts, the region is also

characterized by what is known as “ghost town” on every Mondays instituted by the separatist movements since 2017. Movement is prohibited these days. There are also constant lockdowns during some weeks and months that have official national events. There will be no activities on Mondays, and we will also avoid field work activities during these potential weeks or months that have lockdowns to ensure safety of project staff and participants.

Apart from the fact that this is one of RuWCED’s strongest bases in this region where two of their offices are located, these subdivisions are one of those that we’ve received and handled cases of sexual and physical violence. It is also influx by IDP girls especially working as domestic staff. It is where RuWCED’s vocational training centers are located where these girls will be referred to for economic empowerment. The radio station intended for the purpose of media sensitization is also located in Bamenda municipality, but it reaches for all the Divisions targeted. The targeted commercial bike rider’s association is also in these divisions as well as the traditional councils. For easy understanding, this project will primarily take place in the Northwest region of Cameroon specifically Mezam and Ngoketunjia Divisions.

4.2 Target Beneficiaries

Primary Beneficiaries

The primary targeted beneficiaries or what I would like to call partners of this project will be women and girls who have experienced any kind of sexual and physical violence, internally displaced girls facing sexual and physical exploitation from their domestic workspaces, traditional council leaders and bike riders. The association of bike riders in Bamenda municipality will be targeted, girls and women who come forward to RuWCED or other partner organizations to report sexual and physical violence and the traditional councils in the Northwest region. I imagine all these beneficiaries working together in that with the weakened justice systems, traditional councils step in to uphold the rights of women and girls and uphold just for those who were violated. It also entails men who make up majority of bike riders in this region, taking accountability and joining efforts to speak against these forms of violence. Men also benefit when there is no violence against women because there is better social cohesion, safety of their women and daughters guaranteed and fosters productivity of women which will also benefit men. This understanding on the positives that come with

protecting and supporting women against violence also act as a measure of transforming perceptions of men towards women and girls.

Secondary Beneficiaries

The secondary beneficiaries will be the whole Mezam and Ngoketunjia Divisions of the Northwest region where the radio's frequency covers. It will also be the inhabitants of Bamenda, where the demonstration march pass will be held. Collaborating with other CSOs for psychosocial, health and legal support for survivors will also benefit survivors to get the necessary support and foster protection of other women and girls.

5.0 Project Implementation

5.1 Project Administration

This project will have two main administrative positions, which are the Project Manager and the Monitoring and Evaluation staff. I will be working as the project manager, and as PM, my main responsibilities will be to execute and run the key drivers of the project. With the support of RuWCED, I will take charge of organizing the engagement sessions with the traditional councils, organizing the radio programs with details on what each session will be focusing on with regards to sexual and physical violence against women. I will also identify with the support and recommendations of RuWCED which resource person to bring in at some points of the radio programs. As the project manager, I will also organize the engagement meeting with the Association of Bike riders and coordinate the implementation of the demonstration march pass. I will also oversee sharing hotlines where survivors can call for support and in the case of calls to RuWCED I will work in collaboration with the Gender Officer. I will also connect girls with RuWCED vocational centers and others. I will also ensure that project resources and finances are efficiently utilized for the various planned activities. I will oversee keeping records of events through pictures, videos, attendance sheets and reports. I will also oversee sharing reports on activities with GRO GEST and RuWCED and in some cases feedback with stakeholder organizations.

RuWCED will provide the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) officer. The M&E officer will track the success of the project activities, the M&E officer will also conduct surveys, interviews, and various tools to track project outcomes. M&E feedback will also be provided at the end of every project quarter to provide improvements for the next quarters. M&E will also oversee drafting the various tools needed for conducting the monitoring. The M&E team will also provide a midterm and end of project term evaluation report. RuWCED will also oversee the overall technical support of the project.

5.2 Project Schedule

This project will last for 13 months, beginning in June 2026 immediately after the GEST program until June 2027. In this section, the timeline of activities and milestones is provided briefly. In the log frame which will be in the annexures, it will be more detailed.

ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE		
Activity Number	Activity Timeline	Activities
Activity 1	June 2026	Administrative Planning
Activity 2	July-August 2026	Stakeholder mapping
Activity 2	August 2026 October-December 2026 January 2027	Five Workshop meetings with 50 traditional leaders (at least 10 representatives for every subdivision with at least 3 women representatives)
Activity 4	August 2026 October 2026-March 2027	Monthly radio programs (14 radio sessions)
Activity 5	July 2026	Meeting with bike riders Association and planning for sensitization March Pass
Activity 6	August 2026	Demonstration march pass
Activity 7	April-May 2027	End of Project reporting
Activity 8	May 2027	Impact Evaluation by M&E and final MEL report

Table 1: Activity Schedule

Five workshop sessions will be held with the traditional leaders and as the Project Manager, with the support of RuWCED, I will be organizing these sessions. RuWCED will also support with personnel to join in this workshop sessions. We will also be collaborating with community contacts to ease access and organization of these sessions. Radio programs will be organized two times monthly making it a total of fourteen sessions and this will be organized by the Project Manager, bringing in resource persons during some sessions. A

sensitization and planning meeting will be held with Bike riders to sensitize on the project goals and plan the sensitization march pass.

5.3 Stakeholder Analysis

Using a community based and a survivor centered approach to address sexual and physical violence will involve stakeholders across various sectors and in this case involving women and girls, health, communities, traditional councils, CSOs, police departments and funding organizations. The table below shows all the stakeholders involved in this project and their interest and roles.

Stakeholder Analysis				
Stakeholder	Type of Stakeholder	Interest in the Project	Level of Influence for Change	Role in the Project
Rural Women Center for Education and Development (RuWCED)	Primary/Implementing Organization	High: together with me, responsible for implementing the project activities	High	Lead project implementation, provide vocational training, coordinate stakeholders, sourcing fundings and monitor progress
Women and girls experiencing sexual and physical violence or potential threats	Primary	High: they are the direct beneficiaries seeking protection, justice and empowerment	Medium	Participate in reporting violence, listening to sensitizations programs, and access to support services and providing content for M&E in some cases
Internally Displaced Girls working as domestic workers	Primary	High: they are vulnerable to exploitation and abuse	Low medium	Report cases of violence, enrolling in vocational training programs and benefit from economic empowerment
Traditional councils/leaders	Primary	High: they're responsible for local community (village)	High	Enforce localized protection laws, support survivors through localized protection laws and promote behavioral change in communities

		governance and justice mechanisms		
Commercial Bike Riders Association	Primary	Medium-High: mainly male group influencing community attitudes	Medium	Participate in sensitization campaigns and demonstration march pass, promoting the protection of women and girls.
Community members (men, women, youth)	Secondary	Medium: affected by community norms and violence (some benefits and others at the disadvantage)	Medium	Participate in radio sensitizations by following the program and call ins, report cases of violence, support survivors and protect women and girls within communities
Local Civil Society Organizations working on GBV	Secondary	High; share in the mission of addressing GBV	Medium	Provide psychosocial, legal and health services for survivors and strengthen referral systems
Local Radio Stations (Abakwa Radio)	Secondary	Medium: platform for awareness and community education	Medium	Broadcast sensitization programs and information on support services

Hospital and Health Institutions	Secondary	High: responsible for medical support for survivors	Medium	Provide medical treatment and referrals for survivors
Police and Law Enforcement	Secondary	High; responsible for legal action	High	Receive reports of cases, investigation cases and support protection mechanisms
GBV Cluster and Humanitarian Organizations	Secondary	High: involved in GBV response in the region	Medium-High	Provide coordination, technical support and referral pathways
Donors and Development Partners	External stakeholders	High: Interested in project outcomes and impact	High	Provide funding and oversight into project implementation and going through the shared final M&E report

Table 2:Stakeholder Analysis

5.4 Risk Analysis and Mitigation

The successful implementation of this project also implies consciously analyzing the potential risk that may adversely affect the project. There are several potential risks envisaged in the implementation of this project and there are possible mitigation strategies. This region is a conflict setting and this is the biggest threat to any activity, however there are others as well. Having this in mind at every stage of the project, these potential risks and their mitigation strategies will be at the forefront with key mitigation strategies in place of the implementing partners. The table below will address the potential risks and the envisaged mitigation strategies.

Risk Analysis and Mitigation Strategies			
Potential Risks	Probability	Possible Impact on the Project	Mitigation Strategies
Resistance from some men in the community who may feel threatened by discussions on violence against women	Medium	Low participation in sensitization activities and behavior change initiatives	Engage respected traditional leaders, both male and female champions to lead discussions that frame the project as community protection rather than confrontation

Fear of retaliation for survivors who report violence	High	Survivors may refusal to report violence or participate in support programs	Ensure confidentiality, use survivor centered approaches, and strengthen referral with systems with trusted CSOs and other service providers, trust in the referral system over time
Security threats due to ongoing armed conflict in the Northwest region	High	Disruption of activities such as workshops, demonstrations and community meetings	Acquire authorization from the city officials to carry out the march as it's always the case to get authorization for such public activities, adopt conflict sensitive programming, monitor security situations, schedule activities in safer regions, avoid activities during lockdowns and ghost towns and work with respected groups
Threats from armed actors or individuals involved in violence	Medium-High	Traditional leaders or survivors may be intimidated from pursuing justice	Work through community structures and mediation mechanisms, prioritize survivor safety, and avoid direct confrontation with armed actors
Limited trust in justice systems due to impunity	High	Survivors may feel reporting violence is useless and fear threats of retaliation from NSAGs	Strengthening community based/traditional protection mechanisms and referral networks with CSOs, hospitals, and legal aid CSOs

Misinterpretation of project as politically aligned with government or armed groups	Medium	Community members may refuse to participate	Use neutral community platforms such as traditional councils, independent local radio stations and association of bike riders to communicate project messages
Low participation of displaced girls working in domestic labor	Medium	Target beneficiaries may not have information on available empowerment opportunities	Use radio programs and community network to spread information about the existing vocational centers
Constant Lock downs	High	Constant lockdowns instituted by NSAGs may slow project activities	Avoid activities during such periods, envisage them and be flexible with project timelines to fully utilize periods with less lock downs.
Stigma and cultural norms that normalize violence against women and girls	High	Slow behavioral change in communities	Conduct continuous awareness programs especially through radios and involve men as allies like traditional rules and bike riders in the fight against sexual and physical violence against women and girls

Men partaking in the project being perpetrators too	Medium	Creating doubts on stakeholders' credibility	We are not involving these men because we're endorsing them as not being potential perpetrators but rather to change behaviors, make them accountable and agents of change. For traditional authorities we will try as much as possible to work with those with good reputations in the communities. As for the bike riders, it will be hard to determine this.
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Table 3: Risk analysis and mitigation

The project operates in a complex conflict-affected environment where risks such as insecurity, community resistance, and survivors' fear of reporting violence may affect implementation. Conducting a risk analysis allows the project team to anticipate these challenges and design appropriate mitigation strategies. The mitigation measures focus on community engagement, collaboration with trusted local actors, conflict-sensitive programming, and ensuring the safety and confidentiality of survivors. These strategies will help minimize disruptions and enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of the project interventions. The Project Manager will work closely with M&E throughout to ensure any issues are addressed in real time for best possible engagement

6.0 Budget

The budget for this project will be made in USD as is the case with most projects implemented by RuWCED. The proposed total budget for this project is **USD 3,856**.

BUDGET							
Budget Category	Description of Item	Unit (days, persons, transportation, etc.)	Number of Unit	Amount per unit in USD	Total USD	Available funding (\$)	Funding Required (\$)
Human Resources/Staff	Project Manager Monthly salary	Monthly	13	263	3,419	3,419	
Human Resources/Staff	Project Officer Monthly Salary	Monthly	13	190	2,470	2,470	
Human Resources/Staff	Communication Officer monthly salary	Monthly	13	190	2,470	2,470	
Human Resources/Staff	MEL Officer monthly transportation/communication/materials	Monthly	4	500	2,000		2,000

Travel/Transport	Transportation for project team (5) for engagement and workshop meetings with traditional councils	Per day	6	10	300		300
Travel/Transport	Transportation within Bamenda for radio programs (2project team, 1resouce person)	Twice a month	14	2	84	84	
Travel/Transport	Transportation within for Bamenda meeting with bike riders' association	Persons	3	5	15	15	
Radio Space	Monthly radio space payment	Monthly	7	60	420	420	
Equipment/Material	Sensitization Materials for demonstration march pass (banners, cardboards, flyers, etc.)	Lumpsum	1	350	350		350
Equipment/Material	Sensitization materials for training workshops with traditional councils (books and pens)	Lumpsum	1	150	150		150
Catering	Food/drinks during engagement meetings with traditional councils	Lumpsum	1	300	300		300
Support for Fuel	For bike riders during demonstration march pass	Lumpsum	1	270	270		270

Communication/Internet	Communication for calls with stakeholders and internet for video/picture sharing (3staff)	Monthly	13	10	390	204	186
Miscellaneous	For unplanned circumstances	Lumpsum	1	300	300		300
TOTAL				2,600	12,818	9,082	3,856

Table 4: Budget

It is worth noting that some other important items are not indicated in the above budget because the items are already available. Items such as renting venue are not in the budget because we will use community/head quarter halls for the meetings. These are community existing halls which are free for community related activities and are controlled by the local traditional councils. In terms of items such as microphones for demonstration march pass, RuWCED has a standby movable speakers and microphones. And as for accommodation, project team will only sleep when conducting engagement meetings out of Bamenda, that is in the Ngoketunjia Division. RuWCED has an apartment in this division which they are already paying monthly rents. Also, the staff are already workers in RuWCED, as such we're leveraging on the existing Human capital. To make up for the funding gap, RuWCED will support in sourcing funds from government institutions and other funding institutions.

7.0 Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

7.1 Project Sustainability Plan

The plan will engage various levels to ensure sustainability. To ensure that the project is sustainable and the outcomes, during and beyond the project, we will be considering several steps. The community and sustainability.

- Community

We intend to build a community sustainability with this project that goes beyond the project term. This is ensuring that the community is not just beneficiaries but active participants. The community-based approach of this project builds a sense of accountability within communities and project ownership. Working with traditional institutions, we will also keep contacts and ensure continuous relationships and follow up on their work in addressing violence in their communities. Bike riders participating in the project as partners also build a sense of responsibility and since we're working with the association, we hope to do this more often and they are taking initiative for such, calling out violence, cautioning fellow men and supporting women and girls. RuWCED as an organization will also work with survivors and with the presence of the already existing vocational institutes, during and after the project terms more women and girls will still be part of the program. RuWCED's strength in ensuring and keeping community links will also foster the sustainability of the project.

- Financial

This project is leveraging on the financial support of RuWCED to ensure it's running smoothly. The human resource personnels are already workers of RuWCED which makes it quite easy. With RuWCED's commitment to supporting this project and sourcing funds from other funders and government institutions leveraging on its credibility, the sustainability of this project is guaranteed. Also,

some items and materials needed for the project are also already available in RuWCED's stocks, which makes it even more cost-effective and sustainable

7.2 Monitoring, Evaluation and Impact Analysis

The monitoring, evaluation and impact matrix that will be used for this analysis is based on primarily the Performance Indicators as outlined by the World Bank (2024). It emphasizes tracking progress through measurable indicators, data sources, frequency of measurement, and assigned responsibilities. The M&E matrix also reflects elements of the Logical Framework Approach reflected by the World Bank (2024) and in this case by linking objectives to indicators and verification methods. It is worth remembering that this M&E matrix is in line with the following project outputs:

Output 1: Five engagement workshop meetings conducted with 50 traditional leaders in target divisions.

Output 2: One engagement meeting and one demonstration march conducted with commercial bike riders from Association of Bike riders and fourteen Radio programs.

Output 3: Fourteen Radio sensitizations on sexual and physical violence, referral pathways to report violence and existing free vocational services for economic empowerment.

Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact Matrix				
Objective/Result Area	Indicators	Means of Verification	Frequency (Time/Duration)	Responsible Personnel
Increased awareness of sexual and physical violence (VAWG)	-Number of radio programs conducted. - Number of listeners reached. - Number of sensitization workshops held	- Radio programs logs - Radio station's frequency reach - Attendance sheets - Pictures - Activity reports	Monthly	Project Manager
Increased community engagement (men, traditional leaders, bike riders)	-Number of stakeholders engaged. - Participation rate of men and leaders - Number of community dialogues held. - Number of bike riders participating in the sensitization march pass.	- Attendance sheets - meeting reports - pictures and videos - survey questions on attitudes towards violence at the start of the sessions and after two sessions	After every engagement meeting	Project Manager

	- Behavior/attitudes change on sexual and physical violence against women and girls			
Improved reporting and response to VAWG cases	-Number of VAWG cases reported -Number of referrals made to support services - Number of survivors accessing services	- Referral records - Partner organization reports - Hotline records	Quarterly	M&E Staff and Project Manager
Strengthened support systems for survivors	-Number of partnerships with CSOs/health institutions - Number of survivors receiving psychosocial/legal/medical support	- partner reports	Quarterly	M&E Staff
Increased economic empowerment of women and girls	-Number of girls enrolled in vocational training - Number of beneficiaries completing training	- Enrollment records - Training records - Follow-up reports	Quarterly and even beyond the project term	Project Manager and M&E Staff
Behavioral change in community attitudes towards	-Percentage change in attitudes (pre/post surveys before and after workshop and engagement	- Survey results interviews/focus groups	Mid-term and Endline	M&E Staff

sexual/physical violence	meeting with traditional leaders and bike riders) - Increased male advocacy for women's protection			
Effective project implementation and resource use	-Activities completed as planned - Timely reporting - Budget utilization rate	-Activity reports - pictures/videos - Financial reports - MEL reports	Quarterly	Project Manager
Overall project impact (long-term change)	-Reduction in tolerance of VAWG - Increased community accountability - Localized mechanisms to address VAWG enforced - Sustained stakeholder engagement	- Endline evaluation report - Community feedback	End of Project	M&E Staff and Project Manager

Table 5: Monitoring, Evaluation, and Impact Analysis

8.0 Reporting

Reporting will be done at the end of each activity, and this will be shared internally with my implementing organization, RuWCED. At the end of the project, an overall report will be shared with RuWCED, GRO GEST and other supporting/funding organizations. During each activity, there will be report documentation and picture/video documentation which will be shared with GRO GEST and implementing partners. As the project manager, I will take charge of reporting alongside support from RuWCED. This report will also include the final MEL report. The table below breaks down the reporting schedule and personnel in charge

Reporting Schedule				
Report Type	Recipient	Responsible Person/Team	Purpose	Due Dates
Activity Reports	RuWCED (internal)	Project Manager with support from RuWCED team	Document activities conducted, attendance of participants, participation of participants, immediate outcomes and lessons learned that will support the quarterly M&E reports	Monthly
Photo and Video Documentation	RuWCED (internal), GRO GEST and funding organizations (External)	Project Manager and RuWCED communication team	Provide visual documentation of activities for transparency and communication	Monthly
End of Project Report	Internal and External	Project Manager	Provide overall project activity reports and outcomes	April 2027

M&E quarterly reports	Internal	M&E and Project Manager	Provide evaluation reports quarterly for improvement and ensuring activities get the envisaged project outcomes	October 2026, January 2027, April 2027
MEL report	Internal and External	M&E of RuWCED and Project Manager	Overall Impact report on the Project	May 2027

Table 6: Reporting Schedule

9.0 Conclusion

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) whether physical, sexual, economic, or emotional affect women and girls worldwide and from all social status. Women and girls in conflict settings turn to experience violence disproportionately especially with the atmosphere of silence and impunity that characterizes conflict affected nations like Cameroon. Understanding the context of my region, the Northwest region, I believe I cannot solve the greater problem, which is in the conflict, but I hope the contributions of this project reduce the issue of physical and sexual violence against women and girls. This is not to say these ills were in existent before the conflict but that it has increased and even lessened the chances of women getting the needed support and justice. I am a woman living in this region and experiencing these atrocities firsthand and we cannot be fighting a war within another war. Women and experiencing the conflicts too and experiencing sexual or physical violence within this conflict is certainly like experiencing double layers of war.

This survivor centered and community-based approach will contribute greatly to addressing these forms of violence against women and girls in this region and build a spirit of accountability and support within a community that is also facing other conflict challenges. While support services for counselling survivors are available, this project seeks to ensure that in the middle of the fragile conflict setting, these survivors can have protection, justice and access to economic empowerment. It is about utilizing local traditional leaders to ensure

protection and justice for women and girls in a community where the formal justice system has failed to provide that protection and there is impunity. It is also the safest option coupled with engaging with other key men actors in a community where there are threats to lives when one is connected or relating with any state armed group. It is about finding a neutral ground where women and girls can have the necessary support and protection. Finally, with the recent world backlash in gender equality efforts, I do believe every effort to promote equality is needed now more than effort and there is certainly no equality with sexual and physical violence.

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ANNEXURES

Annex 1: Logical Framework

Logical Framework			
	Success Indicators	Means of Verification (MoV)	Assumptions
Project Goal: Take concrete community engagement steps to create a transformative environment in the conflict ravaged Northwest region, where women and girls can live lives free from the pervasive scourge of physical and sexual violence	1) More cases of physical and sexual violence are reported 2) Increase in legal and psychosocial support for survivors 3) Reduced incidence of physical and sexual violence against women and girls. 4) Communities including men engaged in the fight against sexual and physical violence	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) monthly situation reports on violence against women and girls in the NW region. involving reports from various CSOs working on GBV	Incidence of sexual and physical violence against women and girls reduce in the Northwest region of Cameroon
Outcome 1: Traditional councils actively champion and enforce localized protection measures for women and girls through localized	1) Number of traditional rulers actively involved in the engagement meetings 2) At least 80% of engaged traditional councils educating communities on	1) Knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) survey filled by the participants.	Traditional rulers attend meetings and act

laws enforcing justice as well as sensitizations.	protection of women/girls and develop/enforce protection laws against sexual and physical violence	2) Sensitizations held on sexual and physical violence held by traditional leaders during community programs 3) Reports from cases of sexual and physical violence in the communities addressed using localised protection laws	Community members including Non-State Armed Groups (NSAGS) change behaviors and stop the violation of women and girls.
Output 1: Five engagement workshop meetings conducted with traditional leaders in target divisions.	1) Number of traditional leaders present during three engagement meetings	1) Attendance sheets 2) Pictures/videos	
Outcome 2: Commercial bike riders and community members change	1) radio programs reach at least 90% of the radio station's audience		Communities change behaviors and report

behaviors, recognize, report and act against sexual and physical violence.	2) 90% of bike riders present at the sensitization participate in the march pass		violence against girls in their communities
Output 2: One engagement meeting and one demonstration march conducted with commercial bike riders and fourteen Radio programs.	1)Number of bike riders participating in the engagement meeting and demonstration march pass and number of radio audience participating in the radio programs	Knowledge, attitudes and practice (KAP) survey filled by the participants. Participation during radio programs Picture/videos from demonstration march	Bike riders partake in engagement meeting and March pass
Outcome 3: Displaced female domestic workers report exploitation and abuse and register with free vocational training centers	1)Cases of violence reported increases, more referred services utilized 2) Vocational institute experience increases in intakes	1) reports from stakeholder organizations/police departments	Displaced girls working as domestic workers experiencing violence report violence
Output 3: Fourteen Radio sensitizations on sexual and physical violence, referral pathways to report violence and existing free vocational	1)At least 500women and girls receive legal and psychological support when violence is reported	1)statistical report from stakeholder organizations	Girls in abusive domestic work settings leave and register for free vocational training at RuWCED

services for economic empowerment.	2) RuWCED's vocational institute intake increases by 30% 3) Communities attitude change after following the radio sensitizations on violence. Communities also refer to the vocational centers to displaced girls in their communities	2) Registration files from vocational institute 3) Radio logs containing each program details as well as audio records of every session	Communities are more informed on violence against women and girls
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Table 7: Log Frame

Annex 2: Activity Schedule

Activities	Activity Schedule												
	June 2026	July 2026	Aug 2026	Sept 2026	Oct 2026	Nov 2026	Dec 2026	Jan 2027	Feb 2027	Mar 2027	Apr 2027	May 2027	June 2027
Administrative Planning	X												
Stakeholder mapping		X	X	Constant Lockdowns this month are installed by NSAGS so avoid any activity									

Meeting 1 with traditional rulers			X										
Meeting 2 with traditional rulers					X								
Meeting 3 with traditional rulers						X							
Meeting 4 with traditional rulers							X						
Meeting 5 with traditional rulers								X					
Monthly Radio programs			X		X	X	X	X	X	X			
Meeting with community/bike		X											

riders' association													
Demonstration march past			X										
M&E 1 st Quarter					X								
M&E 2 nd Quarter									X				
Project reporting and Final M&E report												X	X

Table 8: Activity Schedule