

The Christian Women Fellowship of the Presbyterian Church in Cameroon is 60

Introduction: The Presbyterian Church in Cameroon (PCC) is one of Mission 21 partners since the time of Basel Mission. The Church runs several Institutions and Departments one of which is Women's Work Department (WWD).

Women's Work Department: The Women's Work Department was created/constituted in 1961 and consolidated by the Synod of the Independent Basel Mission Church now PCC with the effort of the Basel Missionary wives and other women missionary such as Maria Schlenker, Rose-Marie Peter and Anna Frank amongst others. The 1st African worker of the Department came in 1963 by name Grace Eneme and took over as first African National Secretary of the Department in 1974. The **Mission** of the Department is to lead Christian women and girls to serve the Lord Jesus Christ whole heartedly and bring about positive changes in all areas of life in the home, congregation, community and beyond. All of these are done respecting the values of the PCC and policies of the Cameroon government. The Department is headed by the Rev. Mary Mbole Ekinde Salle supported by a staff strength of 16. Three Regional offices headed by 3 Regional Secretaries exist in the North West, South West and East Mungo Regions of Cameroon. The National Office coordinates the activities of the Department.

Christian Women Fellowship: The strongest arm of WWD is the Christian Women Fellowship (CWF) which is one of the Movements of the PCC. It is an evangelistic arm of the Church as well. It was constituted alongside the Department in 1961 with 6 women who were capable to lead a local group representing the very beginning of CWF. The numerical strength of the movement as of the year 2021 stands at 46,034.

Activities: The Department's activities since 1961 includes:- capacity building in diversified areas for close to 500 widows, 750 young women, 75 Children with disabilities, leadership training for close to 7500 church leaders at different levels, several field visits to the sick, old, poor, needy, 16 Peace building workshops, 150 Internally Displaced Persons trained on income generation activities and given seed capital to start up own businesses, Economic Empowerment for close to 4,500 women through WEELP Project. Catering for the spiritual aspects is through the production of a yearly study book since 1961, Regular talks on health issues like HIV-AIDs and Corona virus also future on the list.

Achievements: Spiritually through the Department, women's character has improved as they prove to be more humble, loving, peaceful, patient, kind heartedness, joyful and can control self in challenging situations that made quarrelsome, uncompromising as in the past. Economically, women are regularly trained in different areas which have brought a great improvement in the quality and quantity of goods produced and services provided. With these, about 18 000 women through the WWD and WEELP project are able to make more savings both as individuals and in other social meetings as well as meet up with basic home needs. Socially women have learnt to take full responsibility over their own decisions towards achieving their own dreams as they have learnt to properly manage their time and resources. The self confidence acquired through the Department helps to promote free public and aggressive search for valuable information as some attend meetings for women's network and other platforms where valuable information is shared. More than 280 women can now read and write as a result of the Adult literacy classes under the WEELP project. In a wider view, there is improvement at the level of collaboration within families through collective decision making and social dialogue therefore promoting peace in the homes, communities thereby reducing Gender Base Violence.

Jubilee: CWF is 60 years in 2021. The women will all converge at different levels following different programs throughout the year to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee under the theme "**My Heart Praises the Lord**". The women are celebrating Jubilee faced with the challenge of office

accommodation where the activities of these 46, 034 women can be effectively managed for proper results. This Diamond Jubilee is therefore aimed at raising funds to complete the PCC Women's Center under construction. The Department is using this opportunity to call on all her members, pioneers, well wishers to join her celebrate this great movement and also raise funds to complete the ongoing project which is at wall plate level needing a roof and finishing.

Challenges

- These 46,034 women are made up of 30% educated and about 70% uneducated and so bridging the gap is a big challenge. The literacy arm of the WEELP project has so far covered about 17% of the uneducated.
- The vastness and enclaved nature of about ¾ of the terrain makes it difficult for effective work to be done. There is great need for a means of transport to facilitate field visits.
- The crisis situation in the North and South West Regions plus the upsurge of corona virus has seriously affected the Country's economy thus affecting the giving ability of the women who contribute in running Departmental activities. Raising funds for the PCC women's center remains a big challenge.

Prospects

- Despite the above challenges, the women remain hopeful and enthusiastic to move on.

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WEELP-WWD

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CAMEROON