



**MINISTRY OF WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND THE FAMILY
CELEBRATES MORE THAN 100 MARRIAGES ON THE OCCASION OF
THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES
Bafia - 15 May 2008**

The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family this year 2008, on the 15th of May in Bafia organized the traditional celebration of marriages in collectivity. This ceremony coincided with the 15th edition of the International Day of Families, which carried as theme **“Fathers and Families: Responsibilities and Challenges”**. The ceremony which was organized under the auspices of the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family was attended in the thousands by representatives of the diplomatic core, international organizations, administrative staff and members of various ministerial departments as well as the natives of Bafia and its environs.

The solemn entrance and official opening of the ceremony was marked by the singing of the Cameroon National Anthem. The speeches that followed reiterated the significance of the double coincidence of the marriage celebrations and the United Nations theme for this year's International Day of Families. The Mayor of Bafia while expressing profound gratitude to the Minister for choosing to perform the marriage ceremony in his constituency, also called upon the numerous fathers about to legalize their marital status, to brace up to the challenges of fatherhood by surmounting all forms of irresponsibility. On her part, the Minister of Women's Empowerment and the Family, Mrs Suzanne Bomback pledged to celebrate the 15th of May henceforth as this will give her the opportunity to help families living in unconsolidated relationships legalize their status. In her speech, Suzanne Bomback did not fail to express gratitude to UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund for its continuous technical and financial support in fostering policies and programmes for the promotion of families and their welfare.

Drawing from the Message of the United Nations Secretary General, Ban Ki-moon, on the occasion of the International Day of Families, the Minister called on families to respect, honor and valorize fathers. In the same light, the Minister drew the attention of fathers to the fact that some of them are violent, abusive and not protective of their families; that fathers have been known to inflict grievous harm upon their offspring, rape their daughters, give them out a too tender an age for marriage, desert their families in the sight of difficulties and hardship amongst others. Acknowledging the fact that fatherhood is full of challenges and responsibilities, the Minister called on fathers to redefine their roles and become the moral teachers, disciplinarians and breadwinners they ought to be, fully engaged in the emotional and practical day-to-day aspects of raising children. On this International Day of Families, Mrs Suzanne Bomback cautioned all fathers to be tolerant, protective, physically, psychologically and socio-economically present and contribute positively to family life.