

Media Advisory

OFFICIAL LAUNCHING OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND UNITED NATIONS' SUPPORTED HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE PROJECT

Douala, December 23, 2020

« PROVISION OF INTEGRATED LIFESAVING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE SERVICES INCLUDING COVID-19 PREVENTION AND PROTECTION TO VULNERABLE INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPs) AND HOST COMMUNITIES IN THE NORTH WEST, SOUTH WEST, WEST AND LITTORAL REGIONS IN CAMEROON »

Douala, December 22, 2020:

More than 183,503 internally displaced persons and members of host communities are targeted to get access to integrated life saving gender based violence (GBV), including Covid-19 protection and prevention services in the North West, South West, West and the Littoral Regions. The initiative is part of a humanitarian response project funded by the European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid (ECHO) and implemented by UNFPA, the United Nations Sexual and Reproductive Health Agency, under the guiding principle to Leave No One Behind, particularly in the time of crisis and emergency.

This project, which will last 18 months, will be launched tomorrow, December 23, 2020, in Douala, Bonassama, at 10 a.m. Opened to media coverage, the ceremony will be jointly chaired by the Governor of the Littoral Region and the Resident Representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to Cameroon. Key implementing partners, namely, the Regional Delegations of the Ministry of Women Empowerment and the Family and that of the Ministry of Public Health as well as the Martin Luther King Memorial Foundation (LUKMEF), including 450 IDPs and 50 members of the host communities in Douala III and Douala IV Subdivisions will also take part to in the event.

Through this project, 80 service providers from 20 health facilities, including their maternity wards, in the targeted Health Districts will benefit from capacity building in infection prevention and control (IPC). They will also benefit from materials and equipment for IPC – such as protective equipment (PPE), emergency reproductive health kits for the management of rape and the safe management of deliveries and complications. In addition, it will help to facilitate access to quality remote and timely medical and psycho-social assistance services for female survivors of violence while also strengthening capacities of local communities (community workers, community counsellors, community leaders) to prevent and mitigate the risks of COVID-19 related gender-based violence and stigma.

It is noteworthy, from data provided by UN OCHA, that the current crisis in the North-West and South-West regions has resulted in the displacement of around 200,000 people to the Littoral and the West Regions. About 60% of the displaced people in

these regions live with host families and over 50% of them are school-aged children. A GBV rapid need assessment conducted by UNFPA in 2019 revealed that 87% of IDPs declared that they had been subjected to GBV, 52% of which was psychological violence, 21% domestic violence, 13% sexual violence. Since the advent of covid-19, IDPs have reported having difficulties accessing anti-Covid-19 barrier kits, sanitary kits for monthly hygiene / dignity kit for girls and women, family planning inputs and maternal health services. Service providers said they did not have sufficient resources to continue to mitigate the risks of COVID-19 in VBG or SRH interventions.

ECHO and UNFPA are committed to work closely with existing governmental structures such as the Ministry of women Empowerment and the Family, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Youth Affairs and Civic Education, International Non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations in order to strengthen and reinforce accountability and sustainability of interventions.

Information on partnering organisations

1. About European Union in Cameroon:

EU-funded actions in Cameroon support refugees from Nigeria and the Central African Republic (CAR), uprooted Cameroonians who found refuge elsewhere in the country, and host communities in the Far North, Southwest and Northwest regions. Aid focuses on providing food, safe drinking water and sanitation, primary healthcare, shelter, livelihoods support, protection, and education.

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, EU-funded humanitarian projects in Cameroon are adopting measures and adapting exiting ones within their projects to help beneficiaries and staff keep safe.

In 2020, European Union has allocated over €20 million in humanitarian assistance to Cameroon.

2. About the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA):

UNFPA is the United Nations sexual and reproductive health agency. Its mission is to deliver a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe and every young person's potential is fulfilled. UNFPA works both in the sustainable development and humanitarian contexts. UNFPA was established in Yaoundé in 1969 and operates two sub-offices in Bertoua and Maroua; as well as two working spaces in Bamenda and Buea.

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