



# **HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE (H4BF)**

2021 Annual Report



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### **FORWARD FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Thank you so much for your support and engagement throughout 2021! It has been another challenging, yet productive year during the COVID-19 pandemic and armed conflicts in the north west and south West. We are grateful for all of your collaboration and hard work working with communities in the north west and south west of Cameroon

we focused on expanding our activities especially our community gender-based violence, child protection and health projects to communities that faced great challenges while putting more efforts on sensitization through schools and other community units. We did not leave out the agricultural sector which is the backbone of H4BF CAMEROON activities and so many other activities including environmental advocacy, tree planting, food exchange programs etc.

This year, we also received over 45 volunteers including national and international volunteers from universities, high schools and local communities. These contributed a lot to the accomplishments this year. Our team also increased as we recruited more local contact persons who have been acting as managers in our community projects. Our online community have also greatly increased through the increasing hard work put in by our agile public relations department which is a huge plus to us and our partners.

Despite the efforts we put in, there were lots of challenges we faced noting the current instability in the socio-political atmosphere in the country but the very strong and versatile H4BF CAMEROON did not allow the crisis to stop their work.

As we start another year of partnership toward advancing women and girls, improving health, ending hunger, overcoming adversity, and making a real and measurable difference in people's lives, we would like to look back at the successes of 2021 and share exciting opportunities for 2022.

## ABOUT H4BF

Hope for a Better Future (H4BF) is a non-profit development organization dedicated to advancing women and girls, improving health, ending hunger, overcoming adversity, and making a real and measurable difference in people's lives. H4BF was recently granted a special consultation status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) since November 2021.

H4BF sees a world in which the most vulnerable people have the power to pull themselves out of poverty and create vital, healthy lives for their families and communities now and in the future. Guided by the basic principles of integrity, accountability, respect, and creativity.

H4BF People join us because they want to make a difference, and we continue to make a difference together. We travel where the need is greatest, to Cameroon's poorest communities. We aim to guarantee that women and girls have control over their lives, that they are seen as leaders, that they have access to the resources they need to flourish, and that they live in safe communities where their rights are recognized.

### **The H4BF Way**

We go where the need is the greatest, to the poorest communities, in Cameroon. We work for transformational change with the firm belief in the power of people to change their own lives. We leave behind lasting, positive community impact, enabling individuals, families, local organizations and governments to build on and sustain the successes we achieve together.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

In alignment with the universal values of respect, equity and justice, and H4BF's commitment to people and the concept of human rights, the mission of the Gender Equity Commission is to contribute to achieving equality of opportunities for health and human development for the women and men with which we work and serve. Our mission requires the utilization of a gender perspective.

From this perspective we proactively identify areas and opportunities for improvement, and implement projects accordingly, thereby allowing individuals to fully achieve their potential, without the interference of gender-based bias, inequity or injustice.

While working towards equity, we embrace differences between women and men and focus on optimizing the potential of all human beings, men and women alike.

We are committed to achieving equity through the activities we implement, the systems we set up, the organizational policies we adhere to, and the organizational culture we foster.

We recognize that to achieve equity, changes are needed, and acknowledge the fact that true change starts from within each person. In our own organization and in the communities, we serve, we share our commitment and work towards gender equity in respectful and clear ways, while respecting individuals' rights to be uniquely different and to make his/her own decisions.

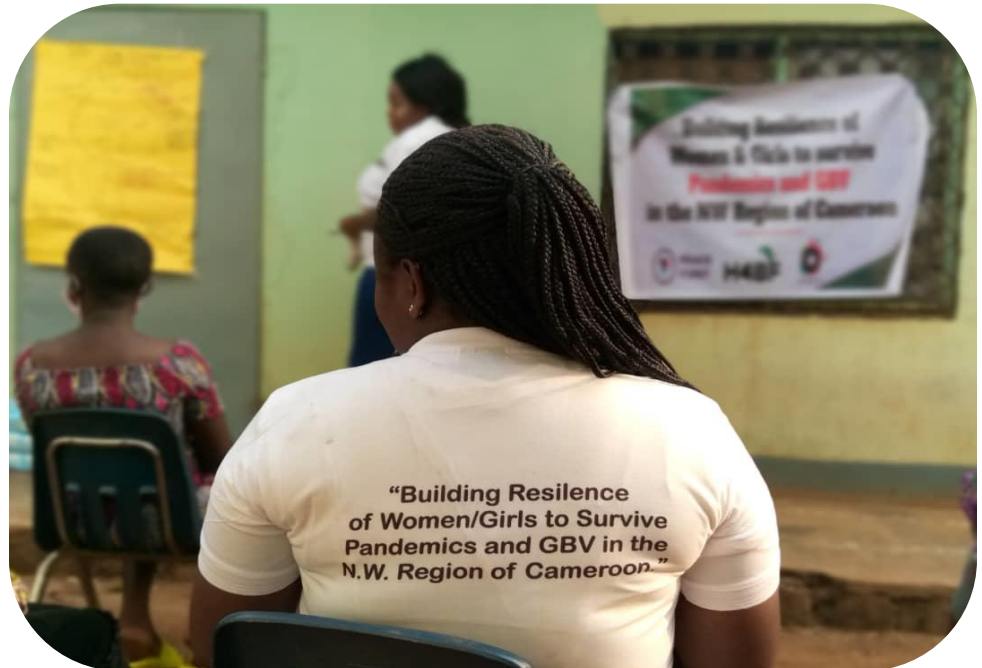
## PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

### ADVANCING THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

*We work to ensure that women and girls are in charge of their own futures, are valued as leaders, have access to the resources and opportunities needed to thrive, and live in safe and resilient communities.*

#### Why It Matters

While we know gender, equality is essential to ending global poverty, women and girls continue to face persistent injustice that violates their fundamental human rights, obstructs their access to health services and education, and increases their vulnerability to gender-based violence and exploitation. They are frequently excluded from



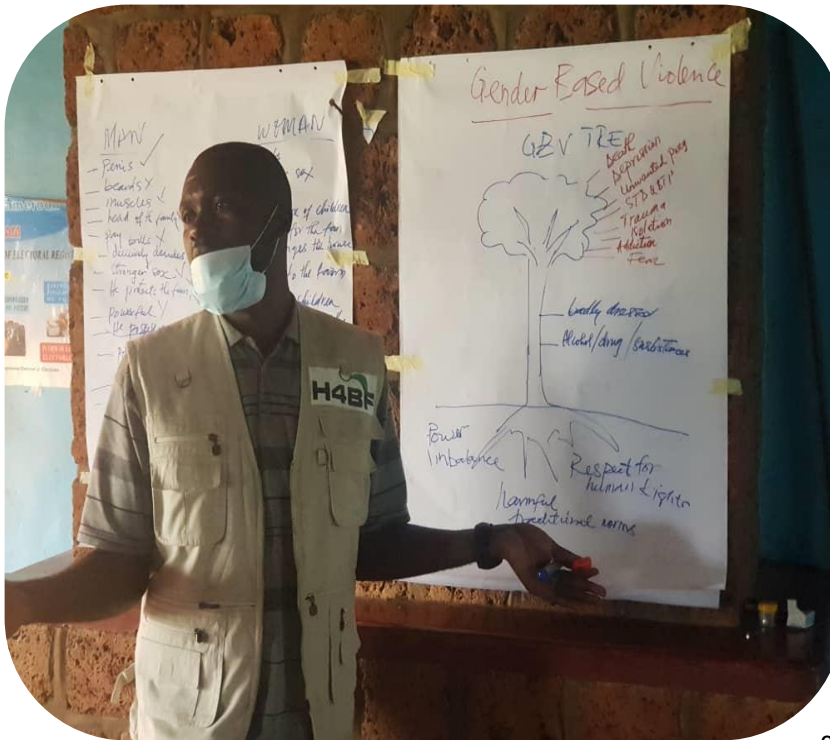
leadership positions and political processes and are often the worst affected by humanitarian crises.

At H4BF, our mission of empowering the most vulnerable means putting women and girls at the center of our work by investing in them as leaders, change agents and economic actors.

Our programs expand women's access to economic opportunities and health services and partner with families and communities to keep adolescent girls in school, prevent HIV and early pregnancy, and stop gender-based violence and exploitation.

Men and boys are also critical to the changes we seek. In our health and economic empowerment programs, H4BF works with men as partners, fathers and allies to adopt new attitudes and practices that benefit their own well-being and that of their families.

## APPROACH:



H4BF incorporates techniques to put resources and decision-making in the hands of women throughout all of our programs, while also addressing social norms and structural impediments that limit women's choices and freedom.

Whether it's giving prospective entrepreneurs with basic business skills training or collaborating with local businesses to boost women's roles in value chains, our economic empowerment projects help women grow their economic possibilities and incomes.

Women Empowered (WE) programs give women a place to build their

confidence, develop leadership skills, form social networks, and take collective action.

To address persistent discrepancies in health outcomes, concerted measures are required. This is why our reproductive and maternal health, HIV testing and treatment, and cervical cancer screening programs focus on connecting women to accurate information and high-quality, respectful services. We also assist women in adopting life-saving health and nutrition habits for the benefit of their mothers, newborns, and children.

Working with women alone, however, is insufficient to achieve gender equality.

Working with families, communities, and leaders to challenge harmful attitudes and practices and bring about change, H4BF provides an enabling environment. Community-based projects to prevent and respond to gender-based violence are included.

## ACHIEVEMENT

1. Over 200 women trained and supported with start-up materials to begin their own businesses
2. Over 200 micro loans provided with interested mothers to provide business & money management training and access to microloans to start or grow a business.
3. Over 10,000 reached via gender base violence awareness creation workshops and trainings
4. 92 women have been trained on livestock farming, basic management, group dynamics, record keeping and post-harvest management.
5. 3500 GBV received and managed



6. Provided vocational training to female heads of household through H4BF skill training center (HOBEFI). (Based on geographic location and culture, people from different LGAs specialize in different crafts, labor.)
7. Distributed 2000 dignity kits to GBV survivors

#### Protecting Children

1. 20,000 children, parents, teachers, and caregivers reached through awareness creation on prevention techniques- teaching them how to stop abuse before it begins
2. Over 12 workshops organized on effective investigations with a child victim-centric approach.
3. Over 8 survivors and their families connected with shelter, medical care, counselling, educational support, and legal assistance throughout the judicial process and beyond.

## ENHANCING HEALTH

### Why It Matters

Over the previous 12 years, significant progress has been made toward improving health and saving the lives of millions of people around the world. Life expectancy has risen, maternity and child mortality rates have fallen, and we have successfully combated a number of life-threatening infectious diseases.

The number of children dying before reaching the age of five has reduced by 58 percent, from 12.6 million in 1990 to 5.4 million in 2017. In just ten years, the number of women dying from childbirth and pregnancy problems has decreased by 35%. The number of adults and children dying from HIV-related diseases was expected to be 770,000 in 2018, down 45 percent from the disease's peak in 2004.





Cameroon's child mortality rate was 74.8 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019. Cameroon's child mortality rate dropped from 210.1 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1970 to 74.8 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2019.

While this development is impressive, millions of people still die needlessly each year from preventable but life-threatening diseases such as malaria and water-borne ailments. In many parts of Cameroon, neglected tropical illnesses are still a big danger, while new global health

challenges such as global pandemics, urbanization, noncommunicable diseases, and mental illness are putting increasing burden on communities and health systems.

Malnutrition, inadequate access to clean water and sanitation, limited access to education and health services, and gender-based violence all contribute to persisting disparities in health outcomes. This is why H4BF is dedicated to improving health by preventing preventable maternal, neonatal, and child deaths, combating life-threatening diseases, and guaranteeing access to safe drinking water and sanitation, particularly in low-income communities.

## HEALTH STRATEGY

H4BF's health-improvement strategy is based on decades of comprehensive programming that not only targets today's important health issues, but also their root causes.

H4BF's projects support strong and resilient communities by enhancing community health systems, fostering social and behavioral change, and building local capacity.

Being evidence-based, community-driven, and systems-focused. To promote sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, maternity, newborn, and child health and nutrition, we strengthen health systems, service delivery methods, and linkages within and between communities and health institutions.

1. Changing the normative environment and encouraging individuals, families, and communities to follow healthy habits at home.
2. Individuals, families, and communities are empowered to actively seek out high-quality health services.



3. Improving the health of urban communities and neighborhoods.
4. Contributing to global thought leadership and creative, evidence-based health and nutrition solutions.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

1. 30 Community Outreach Workers (COWs) (with 70% females) trained to provide basic emotional and psychosocial support (PSS), to survivors of abductions, GBV and SEA.
1. Mapped out existing SRH/HIV services and identifies the most sustainable sources for SRH services and products that are appropriate to the cultural context.
2. 60 COWs trained on SRHR outreach and on SRHR referrals. Training will include culturally appropriate information considerations around participants' age, gender and sexual orientation and gender identity/expression (SOGIE).
3. 60 health workers, particularly Doctors, midwives, Nurses trained on the risk and mitigation of stigma and discrimination, and engage them and other relevant cadres in the sensitization of pregnant women on the COVID-19 infection symptoms and related prevention and hygiene messages and, protect health workers by ensuring that basic protection (PPE) is available (gloves and masks, gowns and protective lenses).
4. Accompaniment to relevant services for emergency cases (by COWs). MoH will primarily support with products and H4BF will provide the specialized services and individual counselling.
5. Distributed 2000 dignity kits for survivors of GBV
1. H4BF staff trained on gender norms/how to leverage opportunities to tackle power imbalance and stereotypes throughout the project activities targeted at improving livelihoods.
2. Awareness raising with stakeholders in 25 host communities, including religious and tribal leaders, around issues that people impacted by armed groups might experience.
3. 2 female nurses state registered nurses have been trained and supported to become entrepreneurs and to open health clinics in rural areas
4. Over 15 free classes organize in Nutrition, Dance, Meditation, Pilates, Awareness
5. Over 7 individual provided with non-invasive care via partnerships with health districts in Bamenda.





### **COVID-19 Awareness Campaigns and Assistance**

Dealing with COVID-19 was a real worry as most persons in the remote areas had no idea what it was all about. We organized 10 workshops in Mezam and Donga Mantung divisions to create awareness on COVID-19 and enlightened the communities on good sanitation measures to combat the pandemic. H4BF also distributed face masks, hand washing tap buckets and washing soap to help protect the communities against COVID-19. Women were also trained on enterprise development to give them financial power to be able to practice proper hygiene during this period.

## **HELPING TO END HUNGER**

### **WHY IT MATTERS**

After decades of progress, the Food and Agriculture Organization has found that the number of people battling hunger is rising over the world. Hunger severely limits people's ability to learn, work, and live healthy, productive lives since food is so important to human life and well-being. Despite being a basic requirement, more than 820 million people—



one out of every nine—are malnourished. And, while tremendous progress has been achieved in the last 30 years toward ending hunger, that trend began to reverse in 2015, putting more people at risk of malnutrition.

Cameroon's prevalence of malnutrition was 5.3 percent in 2020. Cameroon's prevalence of malnutrition has gradually decreased from 15.9% in 2006 to 5.3 percent in 2020.

Poverty, insufficient access to food, a lack of infrastructure such as roads or storage facilities, climate change, natural catastrophes, violence, and civil instability are all factors that contribute to food insecurity. Food is commonly spent 60 to 80 percent of a poor person's income, which implies food is prioritized over other critical requirements such as healthcare and education.

Our mission at H4BF is to identify and address the root causes of hunger in order to provide long-term, sustainable solutions. Our food security programs aim to eliminate hunger and malnutrition by teaching climate-smart and nutritionally tailored agriculture techniques, boosting livelihoods, promoting health, nutrition, and hygiene, and supporting integrated school feeding programs. These initiatives, like all of our projects, are based on strong community engagement and a commitment to long-term sustainability.

We're ensuring that vulnerable children, families, and communities have access to the food, nutrition education, and livelihood opportunities they need to live safely and securely in order to withstand household shocks as part of our efforts to eradicate hunger.

## OUR STRATEGY TO SOLVE HUNGER



1. The food security initiatives of H4BF are based on three pillars: access, availability, and use, and they adhere to the following key principles:
2. Our programs are created to address all of the interconnected, critical variables that restrict people's ability to withstand shocks and pressures.
3. Through climate-smart and nutritionally-targeted farming practices, we attempt to alleviate food insecurity

and nutritional issues.

4. We want to help families, particularly women, establish the assets and income they need to endure periodic shocks and strains.
5. To ensure that mothers and children thrive and reap the full advantages of a nutritious diet, we incorporate key nutrition and hygiene knowledge into all of our program approaches.

## ACHIEVEMENTS

1. 12 unemployed youths and leaders of farming communities between 16-35 years have received training on climate smart agriculture and agro pastoral activities for 2 years and 10 months training course at the H4BF Biofarm center
2. More than 100 women, youths and leaders of farming communities have received training on livestock production/ management, planting technics, post-harvest management for the short course program at the H4BF Biofarm Centre
3. More than 13 students from universities and professional schools in Cameroon have been provided internship opportunities at the Biofarm center
4. At least 352 students from secondary schools' professional institutions and universities have carried out study visit at the Biofarm centre.
5. 22 rural women farming groups have been provide micro credits to enable them improve on their farm productivity and livelihood.
6. More than 240 youths, women and leaders of farming community have received a series of short course trainings on site and seed selection, livestock farming, planting technics and post-harvest management.
7. 80 tonnes of maize seeds and 5 tonnes of potatoes seeds have been multiplied and distributed to farming groups at subsidised rates.
8. We have established a sustainable marketing strategy for peasant farmers by facilitating transportation of food stuff from areas of abundance to areas of scarcity.
9. We have established school gardens in about 15 schools to inculcate values of sustainable agriculture in pupils and students

## **PROTECTING WILDLIFE/ENVIRONMENT**

1. Replaced 5,000 Eucalyptus trees detrimental to farm lands and water catchment with 2,000 water shed and agroforestry trees in water catchments and farm lands in Noun, in the west region and Bui and Donga Mantung Divisions in the north west region
2. We have Established School Environmental gardens in 4 schools to inculcate values of environmental protection and management in pupils and youths



# YOUTH ACTIVISM & TRAINING

## Why It Matters

Young people between the ages of 15 and 35 constitute one-third of Cameroon's population. However, youth's influence on national politics especially in Cameroon remains limited. Because of the violence and corruption associated with politics, parents hesitate to involve the youth especially girls in politics.



Perceptions of exclusion have resulted in young people seeking alternative ways to express their dissatisfaction. When frustration reaches high levels, especially in transitional and fragile states, youth may turn to civil disobedience and violence like the situation that have led to the crisis in the two English sections of Cameroon. Young people in Cameroon are beginning to grow up with a historical and political conflict that greatly impacts their lives. Through the media, they are often taught to distrust and disregard the other side.

H4BF's ambition is to create perspective, as our deep belief is that the lack of perspective is a root cause of polarisation, extremism and migration. This is even more relevant in Cameroon, a country divided through language barriers causing internal conflicts.

H4BF is committed to providing sustainable solutions to the social problems stemming from poverty. Self-development is crucial to achieving this. By giving people training, skills and trades, we are giving them power. The power to take control and change their lives forever, and to help others do the same.

H4BF works to provide young people with access to resources, employment, and education to reduce inequality and to promote their full participation in their community. Research has shown that communities with greater gender equality experience more rapid economic growth, greater



agricultural productivity, and improved food security. Increasing youths' education and access to resources improves the education and health of their families. youths can also play critical roles as advocates for peace and as community leaders and champions of human rights.



H4BF has worked with youth in 4 regions of Cameroon, (North West, South West, Littoral and West regions of Cameroon, on a variety of projects in sectors that include employment, health, education, conflict and leadership. We employ inclusive and participatory methods to reach youth, including those that are most vulnerable and susceptible to poverty, disease and violence. By implementing youth-focused programs in economic

development, health, conflict mitigation and civic engagement, H4BF enables youth to reach greater potential and secure a healthier, more sustainable future.

On February 23, 2019, Through MasterPeace Foundation, Turing Foundation on a project EN power provided funding for an establishment of a skill training center in Baffousam: Hope for a Better Future Vocational Training (HOBFI) Institute with order No 00000256/MINEFOB/SG/SDGSF/CSACD/CBAC under the Ministry of Employment and Vocational Training is in partnership with Master Peace International, Turing Foundation and Noorderpoort to prepare students for a better life with a comprehensive practical training in very useful trades and skills.

## ACHIEVEMENT

1. 8 workshops organized on youth career orientation and youth involvement on community development and electoral process
2. 32 youths trained and supported with start-up materials to start up their own businesses in renewable energy, IT, smart agriculture and Fashion and designing.

# **STAFFS CAPACITY BUILDING**

Building the capacity our staffs is an essential part of programme implementation of which we take seriously. 2020 training sessions were both internal and external, internal staffs were trained via online courses and via workshops.

## **• Internal training**

Training was organized in the following topic to strengthen the capacity of H4BF internal staffs.

- Refresher training GBV case management
- Refresher training Humanitarian response guiding principles
- Refresher training Finance and resource management.
- MEB refresher training.
- Refresher training on COVID 19 Mass Gathering RISK assessment training
- Covid 19 - integrating gender-based violence risk mitigation
- Refresher training on Programming with and for adolescents

## **• External Training**

External training included those organized by different agencies. Topics included:

- Training session for the Cholera Response by UNICEF
- Training on Housing, Land and Property (HLP) CASE MANAGEMENT by NRC Cameroon
- KOBO Advanced Training by iMMAP
- training on Humanitarian Access Negotiation by CHINGO
- ECW Training on 'Programme Planning and Implementation by street child
- Training on Organisational Policies, Procedures & Operational Protocols by street child
- training on Programme Design and Proposal Development by street child
- Refresher GBV case Management by UNFPA
- MEB refresher training for North West By WFP
- COVID 19 Mass Gathering RISK assessment training By UNICEF online course
- Covid 19 - integrating gender-based violence risk mitigation by UNICEF online course
- Programming with and for adolescents by UNICEF online course
- ONG capacity building workshop on financial management and accounting for UNDP technical partners By UNDP
- Refresher GBVIMS training By UNFPA
- Humanitarian Cash Transfers (HCT) by UNICEF online course.

## **MAJOR CHALLENGES**

- More beneficiaries and communities are more aware of H4BF's activities and, demanding her services. As a low resource, project dependent organisation, H4BF material and human resources are insufficient to meet these demands.
- H4BF still has the key challenge of no funds for staff salary or operational cost. H4BF depend on volunteers for her service delivery
- All H4BF vehicles are obsolete apart from one Hilux, which cannot cover all projects in all 10 Regions of Cameroon. This really slows project monitoring and project timeframe not met.
- The socio-political crises in the country is also a limiting factor hindering execution of projects.
- In 2020, the educational projects were not really functioning as most schools in the troubled regions had completely shut down due to intense crisis and outbreak of COVID 19.
- The outbreak of COVID-19 delays some of our funding (Some partners withhold funding)

**Despite this challenging time, H4BF have been inspired and motivated. It has been a joy to witness H4BF's new initiatives come to life this year.**

**Cheers to another year of changing lives together.**