**Human Rights**

**Introduction**

**Definition of human rights**

It can be defined as the claims of our rights that we have simply because we are humans. They are also referred to as natural rights.

**Origin of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. (UDHR)**

Human right was established at San Francisco Conference in 1945 when the UN was established. It confirmed the rights of all men and women around the world. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted on the 10th of December 1948. The UDHR has inspired states and Regional organizations in Europe, Africa and America. The UDHR is contained in 30 articles.

\*Read the 30 articles\*

**Forms of Human Right violation and abuse.**

Human Right violation or abuse are those rights of Humans that are not respected.

They are manifested in the following ways;

1. **Torture:** This extreme physical pain caused by someone or something forcefully.

This is very common in our homes as often seen in women and children. This security officers also use torture as an option to obtain information from suspects, some use torture to revenge others.

1. **Abitrary arrest and detention.**

This is a situation where by individuals are arrested without any legal justification.

1. **Child labour**

Child labour refers to the idea of exploiting the child for long hours under difficult conditions for little or no wages. They are subjected to inhuman exploitation, the child is destroyed and the future compromise.

The main cause of child labour is poverty. Some poor families use their children to alleviate poverty. In most cases, these children do not go to school and they offer labour to the rich for little or no wages.

1. **Marginalization of women.**

In order to ensure fidelity to the husband Female Genital Mutilation is carried out on women. This is practical is most African cultures not living out Cameroon. This is gross violation of human rights because it condemns and discriminate amongst the women.

**The National Commission on Human Right and Freedom (NCHRF)**

The National Commission on Human Right and Freedom is an institution empowered with the competence to promote and protect human rights. It was created in November 1990. It is an institution for consultation, monitoring, dialogue, promotion and protection of human rights in the country. It has access to the police gendanmerie cell for suspect or created to crimes against human rights. The pioneer chairman to this commission was Dr. Solomon Nfor Gwei and current commission was Dr. Chumeta Divine Banda.

**The mission of NCHRF**

* It receives all complaints relating to human right violation
* It conducts enquires and carry out investigation on violation of human rights.
* It inspects prisons, police stations and gendanmarie briguard in the presence of competent state officials

**Importance of human rights education**

* It helps to provide a stable and peaceful community
* It gives citizens the authority to defend their rights
* It helps to protect the child against sexual abuse, child labour and trafficking
* It helps in the protection and preservation of our environment
* It helps to promote democracy and the rule of law
* It helps citizens to respect the rights of others and be respected.

**2.) The Notion of conflict and peace**

Introduction:

Conflict refers to an angry disagreement between two or more persons or group of people. This disagreement often lead to fighting which can be very violent and can lead to death. Conflict can be manifested in disagreement and opposition. It occurs between individuals, groups and countries e.g conflict between siblings, ethnic groups and countries.

**Terms related to conflicts**

1. **Aggression**. It refers to that feeling of anger that can lead to attack or fight with another person. Aggression is therefore that feeling or anger that push someone to cause conflict.

2. **War.** This refers to fight between two or more groups or countries which involved the use of arms and fighting for a long period. War has devastating consequences on human life and properties e.g misery. It is easy to start a war but is difficult to put an end to it.

3. **Peace.** Peace refers to the absence of war or violence. It is also a state of harmony between people. Peace treaty refers to an agreement signed to put an end to violent hostility.

4. **Armnestice or Ceasefire.** This refers to temporary cessation or suspension of hostilities for a specific period of time by mutual agreement of the concerned.

**Types and causes of Conflict**

1. **Relationship conflict**.

This type of conflict can arise from differences, disagreements between family members and friends superiority complex e.g family amongst children if they are not fairly treated. The superior will turn to cheat, humiliate and abuse leading to conflict.

1. **Community conflict.**

This community conflict can be caused by property line disputes, noise, fence dispute, damage, landlord and tenant dispute, hatred, jealousy and dishonesty.

1. **Nations and world conflict.**

These are armed conflicts among nations. These armed forces can be between two or more organized armed groups, government, non-governmental associations, interstate and non-state e.g Bokoharam, Cameroon/Nigeria, Chad/Niger etc.

**Causes of conflicts**

* Land dispute
* Political, religious and cultural differences
* Uneven distribution of resources
* Suspicion
* Individual differences in nature, value, attitude, etc
* Lack of clarity in role and responsibility
* Scarcity of resources (finance)
* Disagreement on needs, goals, properties etc..
* Poor communication and lack of team work.

**Consequences of Conflicts**

* It decreases productivity
* Wasted resources and energy spent
* It causes great harm to people related to conflicts
* It leads to death and property loss
* It damages emotional/psychological well being involved in the conflict.

**Ways of Resolving Conflict**

**Conflict Resolution:** This is the method and process involved in facilitating the peaceful ending of conflict. It is also the elimination, reduction and the termination of all forms and types of conflicts.

Conflict Management: This refers to the process in avoiding and resolving conflicts as rapidly and smoothly as possible.

\*The following ways can help resolve conflicts;

1. **Negotiation:** This is the process by which groups in a conflict meet together in order to resolve their differences.

2. **Mediation:** This is when an individual or group try to facilitate the settlement of conflict . They are called mediators. E.g Cameroon/Nigeria (Bakassi crises) is a mediator.

3**. Arbitration**: This is the appointment of an independent person to act as a judge in the conflict and he decides on the terms of the settlement.

4. **Conciliation:** This refers to the process where by the parties involved in the conflict use conciliator to calm down the tension among two people.

1. **Gender relations and minority rights in Cameroon**

Gender refers to the range of characteristics that differentiates masculine from feminine. Sex is the biological difference between women and men which cannot be changed. Gender therefor refers to the socially constructed roles and responsibilities of men and women in a culture.

Gender Equality: This refers to the equal treatment given to both men and women.

Gender inequality: This refers to the unequal treatment given to both men and women.

**Types of Gender Inequality**

1. **Employment Inequality:** Women with the same qualification like men were treated differently in their job places e.g 2015 there was no female army general, no female pilot, no female head of state etc.
2. **Ownership Inequality:** This is manifested in the ownership of properties as most women are treated poorly as property distribution is concerned in the domain inheritance. This can be seen in the sharing of land, homes, tittles.
3. **Expression Inequality**: There is freedom of expression but most women are not given the chance to address in public. Interviews and questions address to people differ according to gender.
4. **Special opportunity inequality**: Preferences are given to boys over girls. Opportunity of higher education maybe far fewer for young women than men.
5. **Natality**: The sex of the child to some parents is a problem. Some want the newborn to be a boy while the mother wants a girl thus problems even before birth.

**Causes of Gender Inequality**

1. **Culture**: Some cultures place rules and responsibilities for men and women e.g in most grassland culture, inheritance is on the male child. This causes the female child to be deprived in terms of succession.
2. **Mis-interpretation of the dowry**

In most African countries, marriage is traditionally accepted after the payment of the dowry ( bride price)

by the groom to the to the family. This can be in cash or material. Different cultures demand different items. This is the reason why most men paid these items and dominate women at home.

1. **Undervaluing women work.**

In most public and private affairs women are often seen as cleaners or secretaries. This type of work valued by the women for the survival of the enterprise is under valued by the man.

1. **Differences in domestic and public work**

The different job site where men and women play role of mothers and wife while men work outside. The wrong tendency is to equate women domestic servants while working outside is considered more prestigious.

1. **Family**: In most nuclear and extended family boys play the role similar to that of fathers while girls to that of mothers.
2. **Wrong assumptions**: Wrong assumptions held about women lead to gender inequality e.g that men do not cry and soft are for women.

**Gender Stereotypes**

These are common beliefs about the characteristics and rules of an entire group base on gender. Example of stereotypes for women;

-Women are mostly teachers or nurses not doctors

-Women are not strong like men.

-Women are not politicians etc where as;

-Men do not do house chores

-Men are head of families

-Men enjoy out door activities etc

-Men don not cry

**Causes of gender stereotype**

Common beliefs about people base on gender existed throughout history. Some cultures still blindly insist that women are less significant than men. Some causes of gender stereotype are;

1. Socialization: From birth boys and girls are shown what is expected of them. Boys identify themselves with outdoor and aggressive roles while girls identify gentle and domestic roles of mothers.
2. Media: Newspapers, magazines, radios and television have shown that women are sexually weak, submissive and caring. Many of these have shown women as victims while men victors.
3. Science: From a biological point, the body of a woman functions differently from that of a man. Men are physically stronger. Some people use this to support gender stereotype.
4. Workplace: Before independence the general belief was that women work are to marry, raise children and care for the home. After independence women came up as politicians, lead companies but it was still argued that the place of the woman was at home.

**Gender Discrimination**

This refers to the unfair treatment given to a person because of gender(sex). Discrimination affects both men and women, not like inequality that affects only one sex either male or female. Example only female students in a home economics class with no male is inequality.

**Manifestations of gender discrimination**

1. **Single sex schools**: Schools entirely for boys or girls
2. **Access to credit(loans):** Men and women apply for loans in bank but men are favored over the women.
3. **Employment and education:** Certain jobs tend to favor particular sex. For example nursery school attendance for women only.
4. **Position:** Many positions are discriminated on as far as gender is concerned.
5. **Waiters:** Ladies safe more waiters than men. In hotels restaurants.
6. **Football Re-free**: In competitions like football, men are often preferred to women.

**Causes of gender discrimination**

1. **History:** Inequality of sexes in Cameroon is due to gender discrimination. The poor representation in the civil services constitute the foundation of gender discrimination.
2. **Biological differences**: Biologically women bear children. They take care from conception to birth and are granted a maternity leave which is paid for but some women lost their jobs after this because their jobs are terminated with the birth of a child. Thus discrimination.
3. **Religion:** This discrimination at times is in respect to the bible. For example, there are no female priests.
4. **Stereotype:** Common beliefs that people have about men and women that might not be true. e.g women are suppose to cook and care for the household while men go relax at home.

**Effects of gender inequality, stereotype and discrimination.**

* It increases turn over as men put in long hours and are not distracted like women. Men therefor produce greater output than women.
* It promotes harassment of women
* It leads to maltreatment of women
* It leads to family separation e.g divorce
* It leads to wastage of human resources.

Measures to fight gender inequality

Cameroon as a state of law has put in place mechanisms to promote gender equality;

Elaborating the national gender policy document to implement the biological action platform and eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.

It promotes principles of human rights

Elaboration of family code as a legal measure used by government to protect female and male children from early marriages. 15 years for women 18 for men.

Family laws outline punishment against violence on women

The creation of the ministry of women empowerment and the family in 2004 fights against gender bias

Opening of departments of gender studies e.g buea university as a state measure

Provision of the election of female mayors, senators ensures equality

Celebration of the international women day every 8th of march

Girls are offered scholarships to do medicine engineering and business studies. Boys are equally offered.

Appointment of more female ministers in government e.g minister of post and telecommunication

\*Chantal Biya foundation supports women in rural and semi urban areas

\*Churches and Christian groups encourage gender equality by creating Christian women association

\*Political parties are also encouraging gender equality as most female militants are Mp’s today.

**Minority groups in Cameroon**

**Definition**: A minority group is a small group of people within a community that differs from the main population in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, language and wealth

Characteristics of minority groups

* They constitute a small proportion of the total population
* They suffer discrimination from the major population
* They are subjected to subordination against their will to the major population
* They share a common language
* They have a similar way of life

**Types of minorities in Cameroon**

**Ethnic minorities**: They have common physical characteristicsand a history of migration. They love and maintain their identitye.g the Bakas (pygmies) in the south and eastern forest of Cameroon.

**Linguistic minorities**: These are those who speak a common language. Anglophone population of Cameroon constitutes a minority compared to the francophone.

**Religious minority**: These are those who have a common belief but very small in number e.g Baka’s Bororors

**Age minority**: These are people within an age group whose population is a minority. Those above the age of 75 constitute a minority in virtually every country around the world

**Disability minority**: These are people who suffer from one or two handicaps. They have disadvantage because of their condition.

Gender minorities: These are those who constitute a smaller proportion in relation to the total population e.g in parliament women constitute a minority.

**Sexual Minority**: These are those sexual habits constitute a smaller proportion in the total population. E.G Homosexuals and lesbians have sexual minority.

Contribution of minority groups to nation building

Participation in democracy: Minority groups participate in elections which promote the democratic principle of the country. Through elections, minorities also contribute in decision making.

**Contribution to parliamentary and senatorial debates.**

Minority political parties contribute significantly in parliamentary debates. The Cameroon Democratic Union and the social Democratic front stimulate debates in both national assembly and the senate

**Advice and wisdom from aged minority**: Those above 75 have a lot of wisdom and experience which benefits the youths.

**Contribution to bilingualism**: Linguistic minorities have contributed to the bilingual status of Cameroon and Canada which attracts investors from several countries

**Cultural diversity**: Minorities promote cultural diversity which is a touristic asset through their dwellings dances and songs

Problem faced by minority groups

* **Minority groups suffer from favoritism and nepotism.** They have few chances to promotion
* **Segregation**: This is another problem of minority groups face
* **Isolation:** This is another problem of minority e,g sexual minority-lesbian are isolated handicaps etc
* **Discrimination:** In the face of discrimination the major population can help themselves in most cases but the minorities can not e.g the handicaps
* **Limited Freedom:** Minorities have limited freedom of expression not because the right does not exist but due to the inability for their language to be understood by the majority.
* **Frustration:** This is a big problem for the minority groups with disabilities which hinder them from using facilities meant for the public.

**Measures to protect minority groups**

\*By Government

The government has passed laws banning all sorts of discrimination

The constitution of Cameroon guarantees equal rights for all citizens regardless of gender, culture.

Making French and English as the two official languages of Cameroon which is a measure to promote the rights of the Anglophone minority express in English/French.

Regional balance is a principle used by the government to ensure that all Cameroonians have a fair share of the national cake.

\*Other groups

Plan international help to provide education to minority groups such as the Mbororos by motivating them to attend school through gifts.

Non-governmental organizations also help to provide minority groups.

Minority rights: These are the claims of people who differ from the main population to enjoy equal amenities.

How minority groups defend their rights

Creation of association and sensitizing members and the public through conferences. The Mbororo cultural and development association (MBOSCUDA) to promote the political economic and social advancement of their people.

Organization of peaceful protests as a measure of raising awareness about their rights

Efforts made to master the languages of the minority in order to pass across the minority

Organization of cultural weeks e.g the Mbororos

Writing of petitions to the government about their rights

Memberships of meeting social group and other forums that bring together people of different ethnic group.

**Objectives of MBOSCUDA**

* To fight against marginalization
* To fight against gender discrimination and stereotype
* To improve the living standards of the Mbororos
* To promote education of the Mbororo child
* To encourage the Mbororo to participate in politics
* To encourage intermarriages with Cameroonians of other ethnic groups (National Integration)

**TERRORISM**

**Definition**: Terrorism originates from terror which mean ‘’**violent** **action’’** which causes extreme fear. A terrorist is an individual who uses violence to instill fear in people’s mind.

Terrorism can be defined as the use of violence such as bombing, shooting, assassination to achieve political goals.

The department of defense defines terrorism as the unlawful use of force against persons or property to intimidate or force government, the civilian population of the society to achieve political or social objectives.

The united states federal bureau of investigation(FBI) has classified terrorism into two groups;

National and international terrorism.

National terrorism involves groups whose terrorist activities are directed at elements of their home based government without any foreign intervention. E.G National terrorism is the Kuklux Klan.

International terrorism involves groups terrorist cover several countries e.g Isis, Al-shabab, Boko-Haram, Hezebollah etc.

**Manifestations of Terrorism**

The common manifestations of terrorism include the following;

**Suicide bombing**: These are individuals who carry explosive devices that ultimately explode killing many people and causing extensive damage.

**Kidnapping and demand for ransom:** Groups that use this form of violence often kidnap people demanding huge sums of money.

**Cyber terrorism:** This involves the use of fast pace computer networks to damage on the existing computer network and to disrupt government businesses.

**Religious Fanatism**: Some groups use terrorist methods to force people of other faiths to be converted to their own religion.

**Self aggrandizement:** Heroism and the desire to raise awareness cause headline news and draw international attention to their existence

The use of explosives: Especially on infrastructure such as public buildings, roads, bridges, railways and football stadiums

**Beheading of human beings**: This is an extreme form of terrorism that involves the chopping(cutting off) the heads of captives.

**Hijacking of civilian airliners**: This violent method is to draw international attention to their existence.

Causes of Terrorism

**Political reason**: People choose terrorism when they are trying to right what they perceive to be political wrong.

**Social reasons**: Some people embark on terrorism so as to end social injustice perpetrated by the their government

**Religious motives:** Some groups of terrorist violence force people of other faith to be converted to their own religion.

Discriminating justice system: Some people use terrorism as a political weapon to force their government to introduce political and legal reforms.

**Unemployment and poverty**: Poor and hungry people are desperate and would do just anything to survive thus the saying that **“a hungry man is an angry man”.**

**Illiteracy or ignorance**: This is the major reason illiterates and ignorant individuals can easily be manipulated and persuaded to embrace terrorism or extremism.

**Consequences of Terrorism**

**Social impact**: Terrorism involves the loss of lives including women children and the elders. It creates an atmosphere of mutual suspicion, high-tension and make our communities and world less safe.

**Economic impact**: Terrorism also leads to wild spread of public and individual properties, destruction of infrastructures like road, bridges, public offices, homes etc.

Foreign investment is discouraged: Foreign businessmen fear to invest in areas of political uncertainty where terrorism is wide spread

**Decline in tourism**: The tourist industry suffers in an area or country where extreme terrorism is gradually becoming a culture. It also scares not only citizens but also tourist.

Terrorism produces great fear among people and they feel less safe and uncertain about their future.

Terrorism sometime also leads to regimes or change in government

Solutions to Terrorism

**Education campaigns**: In order to eliminate the root cause of terrorism, education is very important. People need to understand the difference in culture, religious beliefs, human behaviors etc They also need to understand the importance of peace, dialogue freedom and equality of all mankind.

**Creation of job opportunities**: With job opportunity available, poverty will be alleviated and human suffering will be reduced. For this to happen, the government will have to create an enabling environment for foreign investments, trade and job creation. This will require the government to put in place an attractive tax code to ensure political stability and social justice

**Mechanism to eliminate social ills**: The objectives of these mechanism is to completely stamp out social ills that retard development such as corruption, embezzlement drug abuse capital flight and tribulation.

**International cooperation**: This could lead to the sharing of intelligence, information there by facilitating the tracking down of terrorism.

Measures put in place by the Cameroon government to eradicate Terrorism.

**Massive re-armament programs**: Thousands of young people have been acquired to confront terrorist.

They have been the creation of police checking points at strategic areas of the high way to identify, arrest and bring these terrorist to order.

The declaration of war on terrorist is another major method against this group as president Paul Biya declared war against terrorist Boko-Haram which went a long way to neutralize or destroy them.

Trading of an anti terrorist task known as the Rapid Intervention Battalion (B.I.R). This B.I.R is well trained and well equipped military unit whose missions is to sustain military campaigns against terrorism and other acts of criminality.

Creation of anti-gang groups for surveillance purposes

Mobilization of military and civilian population with the views of putting up a united front against terrorism.

**REFUGEES**

**Definition of the term refugee**

Refugee can be defined as someone or a group of people who flee from their country of origin or homeless land to seek asylum (resettlement or security) in the other country caused by war, natural disasters, religious, persecution. Natural hazards and man made disasters are the highest causes of refugees which can cause large proportion of the population to seek temporal security in neighboring countries until it is save to return.

The refugees population is on the rise and most of them are from the middle east and sub-Saharan Africa. Many African countries seek refuge because of war, Somalia, Nigeria, Eritrea, Rwanda, Chad, Sudan, Burundi, Central Africa, Ivory Coast are war zones that have sent out refugees. In the Middle East refugees have fled from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya etc

Many countries around the world have welcome these refugees in camps, this countries include; Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Malawi, and countries of the European Union (EU).

Hundreds of thousands of refugees have died in the course of risky and dangerous journeys across the Mediterranean sea to Europe.

**Causes of refugee problem**

**Conflict** **and wars:** Prolonged conflicts and wars have made life unbearable for some citizens in certain areas who are forced to abandon their areas or home to seek for security.

**Religious persecutions:** This is an important reason for the growing refugee crisis around the world e.g radical and violent Islamic groups like Boko-Haram, Isis and Al-Shabab have used terrorism as a weapon to rule and convert non-muslems to Islam.

**Natural disasters**; Has greatly contributed to the growing number of refugees. Natural hazards such as earth quake, hurricanes, storms, floods, tornadoes and tsunamis. These disasters have displaced so many citizens from their homeland to seek asylum in other countries.

**Civil wars**: This is the major reason for people fleeing their country of origin. E.g, the civil war in Syria, Iraq, Libya and others has led to an increase in refugees.

**Electorial malpractices**: These conflict has led to some countries like Ivory Coast, Kenya etc some of these conflicts has led citizens to flee to other countries.

**Military coups and political upheavals:** This untold suffering and political uncertainty in several countries. The state of affairs has created internal security problems sometime obliging people to flee their countries to safer areas.

**Consequences of Refugee Crisis**

**Prolonged suffering and death**: Thousands of refugees from the Middle East and North of Africa go through a lot of suffering because of their risky journeys across the Mediterranean sea to Europe which has lead to many deaths in the course of the journey.

**Malnutrition**: Many refugees do not live healthy because of inadequate resources and food supply, malnutrition which makes the refugees unhealthy especially the children.

**Congestion and diseases**: Congestion and spread of diseases comes from the inadequate accommodation and congestion in refugee camp have often resulted to the spread of contagious diseases like(TB) Tuberculosis, measles, chickenpox, and other sexually transmissible disease.

**Increase in crime wave**: Many refugees often resort to excessive intake of drugs like alcohol, cocaine, marijuana, etc and activities like gambling, vandalism, prostitution, and other acts of immorality.

**Pressure on host government:** Refugees have resorted to serious pressure on the host government because huge sum of money is required for the building of camps provide clothing, food and medical services to the migrant population.

**Problems of refugees and attempted solutions**

-Development in the problem zone

-Overpopulation in host countries

-Origin of tension between their country and the host country

-An extra burden to the host country.

-Visible problems include;

-Street immigration lost which makes it difficult for them to settle in other countries

-They are also exposed to physical violence like sexual abuse and forceful recruitment into terrorist groups.

-Conditions of the camps are big problems to them because of over congestion, hunger, and starvation and the spread of epidemics has contributed to a lot of stress and depression.

-Efforts by government to solve the refugee problem.

-In the 1950s the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHR) was created to handle refugee related issues across the world.

-In 1967, the UNO drew up the Geneva Convention defining the rights of refugees and the responsibilities of receiving countries.

-The International Human Law (IHL) also makes provision if the setting up of refugee camps, financial and material assistance to refugees.

-There is also the possibilities of voluntary reparation where the refugees are free to request importation back to their home country.

-Other lasting solutions include the putting in place suitable mechanisms for the prevention of conflicts and conflict resolution and the promotion of democracy and the respect of human right and freedom.