Committee: African Union

Topic: Access to Education for Women and Girls

Country: Cameroon

School: The Study

Despite progress in recent years, girls continue to suffer severe disadvantage and exclusion in education systems throughout their lives. There are still 31 million girls of primary school age out of school. Of these, 17 million are expected never to enter school. There are 4 million fewer boys than girls out of school. Almost 60% fewer girls would become pregnant under 17 years in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia if they all had a secondary education. Not only does education affect the women themselves but also the lives around them. If all women had a secondary education, child deaths would be cut in half, saving 3 million lives.

http://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/girls-factsheet-en.pdf

The low school enrolment rate was attributed to cost, with girls’ participation further reduced by early marriage, sexual harassment, unwanted pregnancy, domestic responsibilities, and certain socio-cultural biases. This could all change with enforcement of laws, higher safety and awareness.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education\_in\_Cameroon

There are many organizations trying to help this problem for example UNICEF is the lead agency and secretariat for the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI). UNGEI works towards the removal of barriers to learning, such as school fees and other education costs, and for access to education in emergency situations. It advocates for early childhood development and education for children of poor families, literacy and the empowerment of women and young people.

https://www.unicef.org/education/index\_44871.html

The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights is an international human rights instrument that is intended to promote and protect human rights and basic freedoms in the African continent. In Article 17 it states that every individual shall have the right to education which includes women.

http://www.achpr.org/instruments/achpr/#a17

In Cameroon, education is compulsory till age 12. Primary school education has been free since 2000, however, families must pay for uniforms and book fees. Tuition and fees at the secondary school level remain unaffordable for many families. According to data available for 2011, 47.7 percent of girls and 56.7 percent of boys attended primary school in Cameroon.

After these findings, Cameroonian government launched a three-years program to construct and renovate schools, improve teacher competency, and provide instructional materials,which was apparently renewed in 2010. Still problems are not to be considered resolved. Embezzlement of education funds is considered the main problem in primary education.

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The main thing that should change, not only in Cameroon but all African countries is that domestic workers are generally not permitted by their employers to attend school. There should be more control over this and consequences to the employers since many kids are forced to work due to family conditions.