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IMPACT STORY



EYOUNBOU MARDINE



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Eyoubou Mardine now designs dresses for her church members and her local community in Buea

Eyoumbou Mardine, passionate tailor breaking grounds, is based in Buea in the Southwest region, one of the two Anglophone regions hard hit since 2016 by the Anglophone crisis. Buea has witnessed a remarkable increase in IDPs who fled the red zones in the region to the relatively calm city.

Mardine is 30 and a single mother of one child. She dropped out of school due to hardship. She is among the 72 women and girls in Buea who completed SCE's vocational training in tailoring. Today, she is a role model as she designs dresses for her local church members and her local community. *"I am a single mother to one child. Unfortunately, I had to drop out of school in Form 4 due to the lack of funds to continue. However, I did not let that stop me from pursuing my passion for tailoring. I was fortunate enough to learn about the Second Chance Education project through Madam Anita. She explained the concept to me, and I decided to register for the tailoring course. I chose tailoring because I have always enjoyed sewing clothes for people."*

"The training was very impactful as the participants were collaborative and supportive. At the end of the training, I was given a new sewing machine which I use to sew dresses for my customers, usually people from my church. I also make dresses for my daughter and other family members."

"Thanks to this opportunity, my life has completely changed. People in my community now hold me in high regard. I can provide for myself, my daughter, and my family. I have a desire to open a workshop where I can train many other young women in my community. My advice to young ladies is to be hardworking and to seek ways to empower themselves economically."

Southwest region of Cameroon



From 2019 to 2023, UN Women's Second Chance Education (SCE) and Vocational Learning Programme, executed through UN Women's Leadership, Empowerment, Access and Protection (LEAP) initiative, offered refugee and internally displaced women in the conflict-affected areas of Cameroon, along with vulnerable women from host communities, training and learning opportunities in entrepreneurial, employment and life skills. SCE was implemented in collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF), reaching over 12,000 participants across seven regions: the Far North, East, Adamawa, Littoral, Center, Northwest and Southwest. SCE's main objective is for more marginalized women to have access to, participate in and achieve quality learning, entrepreneurial and employment outcomes.

SCE's approach recognizes that, for women who are marginalized by crisis, poverty or harmful social norms, transformational change requires more than the offer of training or education alone. SCE works with women who have been held back by gender-based barriers and discriminatory practices all their lives without necessarily being aware of it. SCE provides access to practical support and life skills training that enable women to participate fully in whichever learning pathway they choose. Similarly, it recognizes the importance of social learning and personalized support throughout the SCE journey. This scaffolded global approach has led to high retention and low dropout rates.