



Gracious Gifters Foundation Annual Report 2024





GRACIOUS GIFTERS FOUNDATION (GGF)

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

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PREFACE

When I founded the Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) in November 2021 and legally registered in January 2023, it was born out of a profound conviction that the most sustainable solutions to our community's challenges lie within the resilience and leadership of women and girls. As I reflect on 2024—our first full year of operational expansion since our official registration—I am filled with immense pride and humility at how far this vision has traveled.



This past year was a defining one for GGF. Operating in the heart of the Southwest Region of Cameroon, we have witnessed firsthand the compounding effects of conflict, displacement, and systemic gender inequality. However, we have also witnessed the transformative power of Feminist Leadership. In 2024, we transitioned from a small, local volunteer group into a strategic humanitarian partner guided by compassion and commitment, reaching 805 individuals with life-changing interventions.

Our journey this year was anchored in the "whole-person" approach. Whether we were providing "Success Kits" to 120+ displaced children in Bokwai, equipping persons with disabilities with culinary entrepreneurship skills, or pioneering digital literacy seminars across borders with Sierra Leone, our goal remained the same: to shift power back into the hands of the marginalized.

One of our most significant milestones was our selection by UNICEF Cameroon for intensive training in Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP). This was not just a technical achievement; it was a validation of our commitment to transparency and our "Do No Harm" considerations. We are no longer just a responder to crises; we are an institution building a robust bridge of trust between grassroots realities and global standards.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to our dedicated team of volunteers and our founding members, whose "free-will" service is the heartbeat of this organization. To our partners—Lead Child Africa, REVOCAM, UNICEF, and many others—thank you for believing in the power of Horizontal Solidarity.

As you read through this 2024 Annual Report, I invite you to see beyond the statistics. Every number represents a girl who stayed in school because she understood her body, a woman

who broke her silence against violence, and a youth who saw a mobile phone not as a gadget, but as a tool for economic liberation.

We enter 2025 with a strengthened mandate to drive our compassion and motivation to strengthen our organisation to become a leading one for community impact. We are not just providing aid; we are fostering a collective movement for a just and equitable society. Thank you for being part of our story.

Eneme Gift Ake

Founder & Executive Director
Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF)
“Promoting the Welfare of All”

CHAPTER ONE

WHO WE ARE AND HOW WE WORK

Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) is a dynamic feminist-Aligned, girl-led nonprofit organization committed to dismantling systemic barriers to gender equality and advancing social justice and ensuring the promotion of the welfare of all in Cameroon and beyond.

Founded in November 2021, and registered on the 24th January 2023 with Reg No: 60/G.37/C84/VOLI/SAAJP as per the 1990 Law relating to the creation and functioning of associations in Cameroon, we operate with a foundational belief that genuine, sustainable development is achieved when it is rooted in equity, inclusivity, and the full empowerment of women, girls, and marginalized communities. Our work is guided by the principles of feminist leadership, which centers on collective action, accountability, and the redistribution of power.

At our core, GGF strategically addresses the intersecting challenges faced by women, girls, and youth, including the lack of access to quality education, essential health services, and economic opportunities. We recognize that these issues are not isolated but are symptomatic of deeper, structural inequalities and patriarchal norms. Our approach is to go beyond providing services and to actively equip individuals with the skills, tools, and support systems necessary to become agents of their own change. We focus on building self-reliance, fostering critical thinking, and empowering informed decision-making.

Our mission is rooted in compassion and service to catalyze lasting social change. To this light, our programs are designed to not only impart knowledge but also to foster a critical consciousness about gender roles and power dynamics. We aim to create a learning environment that is inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs and lived experiences of women and girls. Also, we advocate for and facilitate access to comprehensive health resources, recognizing that health outcomes are influenced by factors such as gender, age, socioeconomic status, and geographic location. In addition, our initiatives focus on creating pathways to economic autonomy, challenging traditional norms that restrict women's and girls' economic participation, and promoting entrepreneurship. Furthermore, we believe in the power of collective action. GGF works in close collaboration with local women's rights organizations, youth-led groups, and community stakeholders to strengthen advocacy efforts and amplify the voices of those most affected by inequality.

Through these strategic interventions, GGF strives to improve lives, foster sustainable development, and inspire a collective movement for a just and equitable society.

As we forge ahead to ensure operational kick-off, we prioritised internal strengthening and capacity building supported by the Executive Director and community outreach activities conducted by a team of free-will volunteers including the founding members.

Vision

A world where women and girls have equal opportunities.

Our Mission

To equip women and girls with equal opportunities to contribute to community development through gender transformative approaches.

Core Values & Competencies

Our core values and competencies guide our ethos and helps the organization achieve its vision and mission. The first three are our core values and the next three are our core competencies.

- **Accountability:** We are answerable to self, organization, and the communities we serve, ensuring transparency and trust in everything we do.
- **Sustainability:** We commit to long-term impactful development through innovative solutions and building systems and programs that continue to benefit communities well into the future.
- **Respect:** We value every person and stakeholder connected to GGF through a culture of dignity, inclusivity, and mutual understanding, ensuring that all voices are heard and honoured.
- **Compassion:** We extend a helping hand to those in need. Our approach ensures that people's well being is always at the center of our work.
- **Equality:** We advocate for equal opportunities for all, regardless of gender or socioeconomic status. Our programs and advocacy aim to dismantle barriers and promote fairness.
- **Empowerment:** We equip individuals with the skills, tools, and confidence to lead and become self-reliant to take charge of their lives and futures.
- **Integrity:** We uphold honesty, transparency, accountability, and dedication in all activities, relationships, financial management, and program delivery, ensuring credibility and trust.
- **Shared Power:** We believe leadership and decision making should be collective to ensure change is driven by the people.

Our Approach

Our Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) programming is defined by a commitment to equity, safety, and community-led transformation. GGF empowers women, girls, and youth with equal opportunities to contribute to community development using gender transformative approaches through education, health, livelihood opportunities, and inclusive programs guided by our values of accountability, sustainability and respect with compassion at the heart of our work. GGF considers its beneficiaries voices to matter, not only as recipients but as partners. Our approach is built on the following core pillars:

- **Feminist-Aligned & Rights-Based Programming:** We place feminist principles at the heart of our design. This means we don't just provide aid; we challenge the root causes of inequality. By adopting a rights-based dimension, we ensure that our participants are recognized as right-holders entitled to dignity, rather than mere beneficiaries of charity.
- **Inclusive & Sensitive Lens:** Our methodology is specifically tailored to be gender-sensitive and child-centered. We recognize that women, girls, and children face unique challenges in humanitarian settings. By prioritizing their specific needs and voices, we ensure our programs are inclusive and effective for the most vulnerable.
- **Accountability & Community Engagement:** We believe those closest to the challenges are best suited to solve them. Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) is a non-negotiable standard for us. We maintain deep community and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that local voices lead the decision-making process. We don't work *for* communities; we work *with* them through a spirit of collaboration and mutual learning.
- **Safety & The "Do No Harm" Principle:** The security of our staff and the people we serve is paramount. We integrate rigorous security and safety considerations into every project phase. By strictly adhering to "Do No Harm" principles, we ensure that our interventions never inadvertently create new risks or intensify existing tensions.
- **Humanitarian Core Principles:** Our work remains anchored in the fundamental values of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence. These principles guide our interactions and ensure that our programs remain a trusted, stabilizing force in the regions where we operate.

Our Operational Scope

Within the Year 2024, our operational area focused in the Southwest region specifically in the Fako Division. This geographic prioritization is the result of a rigorous, needs-based assessment designed to address the unique pressures of the ongoing regional conflict. Fako has emerged as a critical humanitarian hub, serving as both a primary destination for

internally displaced persons (IDPs) and a vital support zone for host communities. By centering our efforts here, we ensure that our resources are positioned where population density and vulnerability intersect most acutely.

In the Buea Subdivision, which remains a major host center, we expanded our reach across diverse neighbourhoods to provide comprehensive community coverage. Our interventions in Bolifamba (Mile 16) and Dibanda (Mile 14) target these areas as critical entry points and settlement zones for families fleeing rural conflict. Also, in high-density urban sectors like Molyko and Clerks Quarters, we provide integrated support systems that bridge the gap between residents and displaced populations. Our work also extends to the suburban communities of Bonduma and Bokwai, where we implement essential community-based protection and rights-based initiatives tailored to the local context.

Beyond the capital, we extended our operational presence to the Limbe II Subdivision, specifically targeting Mile 4. This expansion allows us to address the distinct needs of coastal transit communities that often face different socio-economic pressures than those in the highlands. By focusing on these specific urban and peri-urban centers, we ensure that our feminist-aligned programming reaches the women, children, and vulnerable groups most impacted by rapid population surges and conflict.

This strategic presence is guided by the "Do No Harm" principle and a commitment to deep community engagement. We do not operate in these locations by accident; we go where the need is greatest and where the potential for transformative impact is highest. By maintaining a consistent presence in these conflict-sensitive environments, we are able to uphold our humanitarian core principles while fostering resilience and mutual learning among the populations we serve.

CHAPTER TWO

OUR IMPACT AND REACH

In 2024, just a year after its creation, Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) grew from small community group into a vital source of hope and resilience for the Southwest Region of Cameroon. In a year marked by the challenges of displacement and inequality, we didn't just provide aid—we provided a lifeline. Together, we reached 805 people, including 200 children, 395 women, 180 men, and 30 youths across the Fako Division.








2024 Impact at a Glance

Total Lives Reached: 805

Our mission in the Fako Division is rooted in reaching every member of the community. From children displaced by conflict to women leading change, here is how our support was distributed this year:

Breakdown by Demographic

Group	Reach	Why it Matters
 Women	395	Focusing on bodily autonomy, SGBV protection, and economic independence.
 Children	200	Providing "Success Kits" and psychosocial support for displaced students.
 Men	180	Engaging men as allies in SGBV prevention and community health.
  Youths	30	Bridging the digital divide and fostering Pan-African innovation.

ACHIEVEMENTS BY SECTOR

I: HEALTH OUTREACH

Community outreach on health education

As part of our community health and recreation outreach program, within the month of February 2024, Gracious Gifters Foundation, in collaboration with Lead Child Africa, hosted a unique outreach program titled “Cherishing childhood- Nurturing resilience through Play” targeting Vulnerable teenagers aged 10-17 years. Building on the underlined view that there is increase stigma related to menstrual hygiene and the growing effects on school absenteeism, we focused on essential menstrual health education and therapeutic recreational activities. The session aimed to normalize conversations around bodily



Cherishing Childhood- Nurturing resilience through resilience and play, Checkpoint Buea, February 2024



changes, provide factual information to dispel myths and empower both girls and boys to approach puberty with confidence rather than shame.

During the activity, we conducted sporting activities through an engaged football match that encouraged teamwork and promoted physical health. Also, recreation games such as egg race, sack race and competitive play inciting joy and laughter were carried out. Beyond this, *Teenagers carrying out recreational activities (Football match), Checkpoint, Buea Feb 2024* was conducted gathering experiences and stories related to menstrual health and management fostering empathy and collective solidarity amongst the teenage children. By the end of the session, a total of 50 teenagers 50+ teenagers were actively engaged and educated on menstrual health hygiene and puberty management. Indeed, Resilience is built when children feel seen, heard, and supported by their community.



Activity Awareness raising poster, Feb 2024 *ch Talk on Menstrual education, Checkpoint Buea Feb 2024* *ti Teenagers on snakes and ladder game, Checkpoint, Buea Feb 2024*

To conclude 2024, the Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) partnered with Lead Child Africa and Wem'Afrika to conduct a high-impact year-end outreach in Limbe. While the event embraced a festive spirit to alleviate the economic pressures of the season for 40 families, it was strategically grounded in the promotion of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) and mental health advocacy. By providing adolescent children and their guardians with a safe platform to discuss bodily autonomy and emotional coping mechanisms, the coalition ensured that the vulnerability often heightened during the festive period was met with robust protection and psychological support.



Beyond immediate service delivery, the outreach functioned as a sophisticated community consultation forum designed to gather field intelligence.

GGF utilized this space to facilitate deep-dive discussions where participants articulated their most pressing humanitarian needs and identified gaps in existing local support systems for Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs). By inviting community members to critique NGO distribution methods and suggest sustainable, co-owned livelihood projects, the foundation prioritized Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), ensuring that the people we serve are recognized as active partners rather than passive recipients of aid.

The strategic outcomes of this collaboration have set a powerful precedent for GGF's 2025 humanitarian agenda. The synergy between GGF and her partners demonstrated a unified, coordinated front that maximizes efficiency and donor confidence in local civil society organizations. More importantly, the insights harvested during this mission have directly informed our refined strategy for the coming year, ensuring that our future interventions are relevant, community-led, and evidence-based. We enter 2025 not just as providers of aid, but as an organization whose mission is deeply rooted in the lived realities and voices of our beneficiaries.

II: ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Skill acquisition and empowerment program

In a collaborative effort to promote economic inclusivity, Gracious Gifters Foundation, in



partnership with Tendo's Foundation, conducted a specialized 3-day intensive pastry training workshop. The program was designed to equip 15 persons with disabilities

with marketable culinary skills, culminating in a graduation ceremony where participants received essential start-up kits to launch their small businesses. The primary goal of this training was to bridge the financial gap for PWDs by providing them with a sustainable means of income.

The training was led by a professional pastry chef, with strategic oversight and support from the Project Coordinator of Gracious Gifters Foundation. The curriculum focused on a "learning-by-doing" approach, ensuring every participant mastered the textures, flavours, and techniques required for commercial-grade pastries.



Over the course of three days, participants were trained in the production of five popular Cameroonian "short-eats": Chin Chin (Mastering the crunch and shelf-life), Egg Rolls & Scotch Eggs (Focusing on dough consistency and protein wrapping) and Meat Pies & Fish Rolls (Precision in

filling preparation and crust folding).

On the 4th day, a graduation ceremony was held to celebrate the resilience and newfound skills of the trainees. To ensure the transition from "student" to "entrepreneur" was immediate, each participant was gifted a comprehensive start-up kit. The Empowerment Kits



Empowerment of Persons with disability at the Fako Empowerment Platform, Buea, 2024

Included Dry Goods (Flour and Sugar) Fats (Premium Butter) and Tools (Pie cutters, measuring cups, and analog scales).

By providing both the knowledge (the training) and the capital (the kits), this partnership has removed the initial barriers to entry for these 15 individuals. Gracious Gifters Foundation and Tendo's Foundation remain committed to monitoring the progress of these new entrepreneurs as they begin their journey toward financial autonomy.

OUR SUCCESS STORY

Breaking Barriers Through Batter and Business

"I can now take charge of my own life": Empowering Persons with Disabilities through Specialized Skill Acquisition

The Context: From Exclusion to Inclusion

For many persons living with disabilities (PWDs) especially internally displaced persons in the Fako Division, the barriers to financial independence are often two-fold: a lack of specialized technical skills and a lack of startup capital. For one participant in the Fako Empowerment Platform, these barriers had long created a sense of social exclusion and a stagnant desire for self-reliance.

The Story: A Journey of Texture and Mastery

A visually impaired participant joined the three-day intensive training organized by the Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) in partnership with the Tendo's Foundation. Her goal was simple but profound: to transition from being a spectator in the economy to becoming a self-reliant entrepreneur. Under the mentorship of a professional chef, the training focused on high-demand, commercial-grade pastries, including Chin Chin, Meat Pies, and Fish Rolls.

"I have always wanted to work, but I had no skills or the money to start anything. During this training, we did not just listen to lectures; we practiced until we mastered the textures and flavours."

The Intervention: A Practical, Startup-Ready Model

The GGF Skill Acquisition and Empowerment Program is built on the principle of Applied Learning. The methodology ensures that participants do not just gain theoretical knowledge but achieve professional-level competence:

- **Hands-on Mastery:** Moving beyond traditional classroom styles, the program prioritized repetitive practice, allowing the visually impaired participant to master the "feel" and consistency of commercial-grade pastry dough.
- **Startup Support:** Recognizing that knowledge alone cannot launch a business, GGF provided the necessary startup kits and resources at the conclusion of the training.
- **Inclusive Pedagogy:** The curriculum was adapted to ensure that participants with different abilities could follow technical instructions and achieve market-standard results.

The Impact: Self-Reliance and Agency

The transformation for this participant extends far beyond the kitchen. The program served as a catalyst for a new sense of identity and agency.

- **Economic Independence:** By leaving with both the "know-how" and the physical startup resources, she is now positioned to launch her own micro-enterprise immediately.
- **Psychological Empowerment:** The mastery of a professional trade has dismantled the feeling of being "left out" of society.
- **Dignified Livelihood:** For a visually impaired individual, the ability to produce goods for the market provides a sustainable path to being self-taught and self-reliant.

Moving Forward: Scaling Inclusive Empowerment

This success story highlights our commitment to the localization of empowerment. By targeting vulnerable groups and providing them with high-value vocational skills, GGF and its partners are ensuring that disability does not mean inability. We continue to advocate for a community where every individual, regardless of physical challenge, has the tools to take charge of their own life.

Direct Quotes

"For a long time, I have felt excluded from the society because of my disability. I have always wanted to work, but I have no skills or the money to start anything. During the three-day training with GGF and Tendo's Foundation, the professional chef (Miss Darriete) taught us exactly how to make commercial-grade pastries (Chin Chin, Meat Pies, and Fish Rolls etc). During the training, we did not just listen to lectures we practiced until we

III. Education and Youth Empowerment

Commemoration of the International Youth Day

In celebration of International Youth Day 2024, Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) partnered with Gender Equality for Good Governance Sierra Leone to host a cross-national virtual seminar titled "Bridging the Digital Divide." This strategic collaboration was designed to shift the narrative for African youth, transitioning them from passive consumers of technology to active digital innovators. By framing digital literacy as the "new currency" for economic survival, GGF emphasized that the ability to navigate the digital landscape is now a fundamental requirement for personal and communal advancement.

The curriculum moved beyond basic technical instruction to focus on two high-impact pillars: Digital Entrepreneurship and Innovative Education. Participants were trained on how to launch and manage small businesses using accessible online tools, as well as how to leverage global learning resources to solve localized community problems. This approach empowered 30 young participants to view their mobile devices and computers not as mere social gadgets, but as powerful engines for sustainable development and income generation.



Facilitators Flyer for the event, August, 2024 and Event Flyer

Beyond skill acquisition, the seminar fostered a spirit of Global Competitiveness and Pan-African Solidarity. By facilitating a direct exchange of ideas between youth in Cameroon and Sierra Leone, GGF broadened the horizons of the participants, preparing them to compete in a globalized digital economy. This cross-border synergy demonstrated that when youth

are equipped with the right mindset and tools, they can bridge the digital gap and become the primary architects of Africa's technological future.

OUR SUCCESS STORY

From Social Scrolling to Digital Sovereignty

"My phone is no longer a toy": Transforming Digital Literacy into Economic Opportunity

The Context: Beyond the Digital Divide

In many conflict-affected and developing regions like Cameroon's SW and NW region, access to a smartphone does not always equate to digital empowerment. While many youths possess the hardware, there remains a significant "usage gap" where devices are primarily utilized for entertainment rather than economic advancement. For one young participant, the International Youth Day Virtual Seminar served as the catalyst to bridge this divide.

The Story: A Shift in Perspective

Participating in a cross-border virtual exchange that brought together youths from Cameroon and Sierra Leone, a young participant experienced a fundamental shift in how she viewed her role in the global economy. Before the seminar, her digital footprint was limited to social media and leisure.

"I used to think my phone was just for social media and passing time. After joining the seminar, my whole perspective shifted. I learned that digital literacy is actually a new currency for our survival."

The Intervention: "Bridging the Digital Divide"

The virtual seminar, organized by Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF), was designed to move beyond theoretical discussions of technology and provide practical, localized solutions for youth employment:

- **Cross-Border Knowledge Exchange:** By connecting youths from different West and Central African nations, the program fostered a sense of "global digital citizenship" and shared problem-solving.
- **Accessible Toolkits:** Facilitators demonstrated how to use free and low-cost online tools—already accessible on basic smartphones—to launch micro-businesses and community projects.
- **Problem-Solving Mindset:** The curriculum focused on "digital agency," teaching participants to identify community problems that could be solved through digital platforms.

The Impact: A "Powerful Engine" for Income

The transformation was immediate and practical. The participant moved from being a passive consumer of content to an active producer of value.

- **Economic Reorientation:** The device was rebranded from a "toy" to a "powerful engine" for income generation.
- **Community Contribution:** Equipped with new skills, she is now focused on using digital tools to solve local problems, directly contributing to the development of her community.
- **Global Competitiveness:** The training provided the foundational confidence needed to compete in a global digital economy, regardless of geographical location.

Moving Forward: Digital Literacy as a Right

This story underscores GGF's commitment to youth-driven and girl-led digital inclusion. As we continue to navigate a post-conflict recovery landscape, GGF remains dedicated to ensuring that every young person has the skills to turn their digital access into a sustainable livelihood and a tool for regional development.

Direct quotes

"I used to think my phone was just for social media and passing time. After joining the virtual seminar with youths from Cameroon and Sierra Leone, my whole perspective shifted. I learned that digital literacy is actually a new currency for our survival. The facilitators showed us how to use accessible online tools to launch a small business and solve problems right here in our own communities. I don't see my device as a toy anymore but a powerful engine for me to generate income and contribute to development. I have been fully equipped to compete in a global digital economy. A young Participant during the workshop"

Commemoration of the International Day of the Girl Child – Girls Vision for the Future

In alignment with our GGF Gender Program's commitment to fostering female agency, the "Girls' Vision for the Future" seminar at Michael Wegem Nursery and Primary School, Clerks Quarters, Buea served as a critical intervention in the lives of 30 young girls in Buea. Partnering with the Female and More Organization, GGF addressed the intersectional barriers of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) and Period Poverty, which remain primary drivers of school dropout rates for girls in conflict-affected regions. By providing education on the spectrum of GBV and distributing essential sanitary kits, the program moved beyond charity to promote bodily autonomy. This ensures that girls possess the confidence to claim their right to safety and the physical resources to remain in the classroom, effectively closing the gender gap in educational attendance.



Excerpts of the Commemoration of the International Day of the Girl Child at Michael Wegem Nursery and Primary School, Clerks Quarters, Buea, October 2024



A cornerstone of the GGF Gender Program is the cultivation of female leadership and psychological resilience. Recognizing that systemic inequality often manifests as a "poverty of aspiration," the seminar introduced a high-impact module on overcoming procrastination and time theft. This session reframed productivity as a gendered tool for liberation, teaching girls to manage the fear of failure and emotional overwhelmedness that often stifles their potential.

Through technical strategies like the 5-Minute Rule and goal-breaking, participants were trained to transition from passive survivors to proactive architects of their own futures. This focus on "Mental Readiness" ensures that the vision these girls hold is backed by the executive discipline required to compete and lead in any professional or social sphere.

The long-term impact of this initiative reflects GGF's broader gender strategy: creating a holistic support system that empowers the "whole girl." By integrating health (menstrual hygiene), safety (GBV prevention), and productivity (academic discipline), the foundation is building a generation of girls who are not only equipped to survive their environment but to transform it. This strategic investment in the leadership potential of Buea's youth ensures that 30 future leaders now possess a comprehensive toolkit of supplies and mental strategies. Through these targeted interventions, GGF continues to dismantle the structural and psychological barriers to gender equality, ensuring that every girl child has the health, safety, and discipline to turn her vision into a reality.

Back to School Education Program: Ensuring Educational Equity

In the conflict-stricken Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, the Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) has redefined educational support by treating it as a pathway to stability rather than just a logistical task. Through a strategic coalition with Lead Child Africa, Wem'Afrika, and Blissful Hearts Foundation, GGF spearheaded a unified response that pooled resources to reach over 120 vulnerable children within Bokwai community in Buea subdivision of Fako



Excerpts of School kit distribution within the Back-to-school program in Bokwai community, Buea, September 2024

Division, SW Region of Cameroon. This partnership transformed the "Back to School Support" initiative into a comprehensive safety net, ensuring that the sheer scale of the displacement crisis did not prevent these young survivors from reclaiming their right to learn and grow.



Excerpts of School kit distribution within the Back-to-school program in Bokwai community, Buea, September 2024

The core of the project's success lies in its dual-layered intervention strategy, which addresses both the visible and invisible barriers to education. By distributing comprehensive "Success Kits" containing durable school bags, water bottles, and stationery, the foundation removed the immediate financial burdens from displaced families, granting students the pride of

ownership. Simultaneously, GGF prioritized the "whole child" by integrating specialized psychosocial support into the distribution events. These trauma-informed mental health sessions provided a safe space for children to process the scars of displacement, building the internal confidence necessary to navigate new and often intimidating school environments.

Ultimately, this initiative has achieved a profound shift from survival to reintegration, ensuring that 120+ students are not just physically present in classrooms, but mentally prepared to excel. By providing both the material tools and the psychological "breath" required to focus, GGF and its partners have restored a sense of community dignity and educational equity. These children are no longer defined solely by the conflict they fled; they are now active students with the stability needed to build a future, proving that education remains the most resilient tool for lasting peace and normalcy.

OUR SUCCESS STORY

Reclaiming the Future in Bokwai- Fako Division- SW region of Cameroon "I felt like a student again": How Holistic Support is Restoring Hope for IDP Children

The Context: Education Under Shadow

For many Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) in the Southwest Region, the dream of returning to the classroom is often overshadowed by the harsh realities of conflict and displacement. Beyond the physical loss of homes and belongings, the psychological weight of "scary experiences" often creates a barrier to learning that a simple notebook cannot fix.

The Story: From Survival to Success

At 14 years old, a young student residing in Bokwai found herself at a crossroads. Having fled her home due to the ongoing conflict, her family was stripped of the basic resources needed for education.

"We lost everything, and the idea of buying a new bag or writing materials felt impossible. I felt left out."

The Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF), in collaboration with its partners, stepped in to bridge this gap through the Back-to-School Program. The intervention was designed not just to provide physical tools, but to address the hidden emotional burdens carried by displaced children.

The Intervention: A Two-Fold Approach

The GGF program provided a comprehensive support package that addressed both the material and emotional needs of the students:

- **Didactic Materials:** Provision of "Back-to-School Kits" including bags and writing materials, which significantly reduced the financial burden on struggling parents.
- **Psychosocial Support (PSS):** Integrated sessions where students could discuss their traumatic experiences in a safe environment.

The Impact: "Psychological Breath"

The result was a profound shift in the student's outlook. The combination of material aid and mental health support allowed her to move past her status as a victim and reclaim her identity as a learner.

- **Restored Identity:** "I didn't feel left out anymore; I felt like a student again."
- **Mental Clarity:** The PSS sessions provided the "psychological breath" needed to stop worrying about the past and start focusing on lessons.
- **Enhanced Readiness:** With her dignity restored and her mind clear, she declared, "Now, I will not just start attending classes—I am ready to excel."

Looking Forward

This story from Bokwai serves as a testament to the power of holistic humanitarian aid. By pairing material distribution with survivor-centered psychosocial support, GGF continues to empower the next generation of leaders in conflict-affected regions to look beyond their circumstances and toward a brighter academic future. Partnering to support this initiative for hundred of children within the communities is welcomed.

Direct Quotes

"When my family and I had to flee our home because of the conflict, we lost everything, and the idea of buying a new bag or writing materials felt impossible. But then GGF and her partners came to Bokwai with back-to-school Kits. After receiving the didactic materials, I didn't feel like a left out anymore; I felt like a student again because the support has really reduced the burden on my mother. What helped even more were the sessions where we could talk about the scary things we've been through. It gave me the psychological breath I needed to stop worrying about the past and start focusing on my lessons. Now, I will not just start attending classes I am ready to excel. - A 14 years IDP student residing in Bokwai recounted to our Team"

IV: Institutional strengthening and staff capacity Development Survivor Voices Against Rape (SUVAR 2024) Conference

As part of our internal capacity building initiatives, we participated in the organised 02-day (16th and 17th of March 2024) conference on Survivors Voices Against Rape held in March 2024 by Rescue Women Cameroon (REVOCAM). This focused on building organisational capacities on responding to sexual and Gender based violence. The conference provided intensive training focusing on GBV Intervention Protocols especially on GBV Core principles with attention to the "Do No Harm" principle, ensuring that initial contact with SGBV survivors especially children is handled in a way that prevents re-traumatization. Also, the conference provided overview on the Referral Pathway by strengthening our knowledge of the legal and medical channels required to ensure survivors receive holistic justice and care. In addition, we gained capacity in conducting Healing-Informed Advocacy by moving beyond simple aid to understanding the long-term psychological journey of a survivor.



GGF Participation in the Survivor Voices Against Rape Conference, Buea, 16-17th 2024

Capacity Building on Accountability to Affected Populations- Standard Operating Procedure for CSO

In November 2024, the Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) achieved a significant milestone in its journey toward institutional excellence by participating in a high-level, two-day intensive training on Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP), organized by UNICEF Cameroon. This strategic selection by a UN agency underscores GGF's growing reputation as a reliable and technically capable partner in the Southwest Region's humanitarian ecosystem. The training was specifically designed to standardize the way Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) interact with vulnerable communities, ensuring that aid is not merely a transaction but a process rooted in the core principles of dignity, transparency, and the "Do No Harm" ethical framework.

Central to this capacity-strengthening exercise was the formalization of Transparent Feedback and Response Systems (FRM) and the alignment of GGF's internal Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) with international humanitarian cluster standards. By adopting these rigorous protocols, GGF has successfully bridged the gap between grassroots responsiveness and high-level institutional management. This technical evolution allows the foundation to speak the "common language" of international NGOs and UN agencies, enhancing our inter-agency compatibility and ensuring that our communication channels are safe, accessible, and responsive to the grievances of the marginalized groups we serve.



GGF Participation in the UNICEF Accountability to Affected Population-SOP training for CSO in the SW region, November 2024, Buea

This commitment to organizational strengthening further solidifies GGF's identity as a feminist-led organization that prioritizes the voices of women and vulnerable populations in every decision-making phase. By benchmarking our internal processes against the highest global standards, we have moved beyond simple aid delivery to building a robust bridge of trust with the community. We emerge from this UNICEF-led training with a strengthened ethical mandate and the advanced technical capacity required to manage complex humanitarian projects with the transparency and professional excellence that the people of the Southwest Region deserve.

V: Community Gender Awareness and Sensitization Program Community Prevention of Rape Sensitization and Outreach



In July 2024, the Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF), in collaboration with Hope in Pink and Hope Fountains, launched a strategic advocacy initiative to combat the surge of sexual violence in the crisis-affected Southwest Region. The project was built on the "First Responder" concept, moving beyond mere awareness to equip the general public with the skills needed to handle disclosures of abuse safely and professionally. By utilizing a unified technical language, the intervention ensured a survivor-centric approach that prioritized the dignity and safety of those most at risk in zones like Mile 14 and Mile 16 communities within



Fako Division of the South west region of Cameroon. The operational strategy relied on a dual-track approach: grassroots mobilization and mass-media advocacy.

At the community level, GGF engaged traditional "Njangi" savings houses and orphanages, such as HOTPEC and Grace of God, to deliver sensitive education on "red flags" and grooming behaviors within established environments of trust. Simultaneously, the foundation scaled its reach through public transit and radio.



Session with Children at HOPTEC and Grace of God Orphanages, Mile 14, July 2024

By partnering with the Taxi Drivers Union to place informative stickers in vehicles and broadcasting legal guides on Mt. Cameroon FM, GGF effectively transformed the city's transport network and airwaves into a mobile protection system, reaching over 300 individuals.



Radio education and sensitization at Mount Cameroon FM (FM98.6) and Revival Gospel Radio (FM 105.5, Buea, July 2024)

The outcomes of this initiative represent a significant shift from passive observation to active community custodianship. Beyond the direct empowerment of 300+ women, men, and children with SGBV knowledge, the project successfully integrated GGF into the local referral pathway, ensuring that survivors have a clear route to support. By training ordinary residents as first responders and engaging influential community structures, the program

has created a sustainable "ripple effect." This multi-channel advocacy model proves that even in the most complex crisis environments, resilience is built when communities are given the tools to speak up and the institutional support to act.

OUR SUCCESS STORY

Breaking the Silence in Mile 14: Fako Division - SW Region of Cameroon "I am no longer just a bystander": How Training is Turning Community Members into Safety Custodians

The Context: Culture of silence

In the Mile 14 community, the shadows of the ongoing crisis have often provided a veil for sexual violence. For many women, the increase in abuse was met with a heavy, suffocating silence—a byproduct of deep-seated cultural shame and the fear of retaliation. While many community members felt the urge to intervene, they remained paralysed by a lack of knowledge and the fear of making a situation worse for the survivor or themselves.

The Story: From Witness to Warden

A woman from the Mile 14 community lived through this tension daily. She watched her neighbourhood struggle under the weight of the crisis, seeing the signs of abuse but feeling powerless to act.

"In my neighbourhood, there has been so much silence and shame surrounding sexual violence. I have always wanted to help, but I didn't know what to say or how to stay safe while doing it."

The turning point came when the Gracious Gifts Foundation (GGF) and its partners brought their sensitization efforts directly to the heart of the community: the 'Njangi' (savings group) house. By meeting women in their own trusted spaces, GGF transformed a routine gathering into a hub for protection and empowerment.

The Intervention: The First Responder Framework

The GGF program introduced a specialized training module designed to decentralize protection and put power back into the hands of community members:

- **The 'First Responder' Concept:** Training residents to act as the immediate point of contact for survivors, ensuring the first reaction a victim receives is one of support, not judgment.
- **Recognizing 'Red Flags':** Identifying the subtle behavioural and physical indicators of abuse that often go unnoticed in a high-stress conflict zone.
- **Professional Disclosure Handling:** Teaching survivors-centered communication techniques to ensure that when a victim speaks out, they are not re-traumatized by the listener's response.
- **Referral Pathways:** Mapping out clear, actionable routes to medical and legal services, ensuring help is only a phone call or a short walk away.

The Impact: A community custodian

The training shifted the woman's perspective from one of helpless observation to active guardianship. The "shame" was replaced by a professionalized sense of duty.

- **Empowered Action:** Knowing the specific "what" and "how" of intervention removed the barrier of fear.
- **Structural Knowledge:** She gained a technical understanding of the referral system, bridging the gap between a victim and professional medical or legal aid.
- **Shift in Identity:** She no longer views herself as a victim of her environment, but as a protector of it. "I'm no longer just a bystander; I am a custodian for the safety of my community."

Looking Forward

This success story from Mile 14 highlights that the best way to combat sexual violence in conflict zones is to empower the people who live there. By turning Njangi houses into safe havens and neighbours into trained responders, GGF is dismantling the culture of silence. Strengthening these referral pathways and training more "custodians" is essential to ensuring that no survivor in the Fako Division has to suffer in the dark.

Direct Quotes

"In my neighbourhood, there has been so much silence and shame surrounding sexual violence, even as it was happening more often because of the crisis. I have always wanted to help, but I didn't know what to say or how to stay safe while doing it. GGF and her partners came to our 'Njangi' house and taught us the 'First Responder' concept. They showed us how to recognize 'red flags' and, most importantly, how to handle a disclosure of abuse professionally without re-traumatizing the survivor. Now, I know exactly where the referral pathways are to get someone medical or legal help. I'm no longer just a bystander; I am a custodian for the safety of my community."

— A woman from the Mile 14 community recounted to our Team.

CHAPTER THREE

OUR WORKING AND SERVING TOGETHER

At Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF), we believe that true impact is never a solo endeavor. Our approach to partnerships is deeply rooted in Feminist Partnership Principles, which move beyond traditional, top-down funding models toward a radical commitment to power-sharing, mutual growth, and collective care. We don't just "implement projects"; we build a collaborative ecosystem where the act of serving together is as transformative as the service itself.

Recognizing that resources in the Southwest Region are often scarce, we intentionally sought out other local associations and grassroots actors. By anchoring our passion to their unique strengths, we optimized our collective capacities to foster joint community delivery. This "Horizontal Solidarity" allows us to share knowledge, exchange mentorship, and provide a unified response to the complex needs of displaced populations. We view our partners not as competitors, but as essential allies in a shared mission to dismantle systemic inequality.

Our commitment to excellence led us to bridge the gap between grassroots energy and institutional structure. We actively sought guidance from Government Technical Ministries and maintained a consistent presence within Humanitarian Coordination Mechanisms and specific Areas of Responsibility (AoRs). By participating in high-level meetings and capacity-building initiatives—such as our engagements with UNICEF and REVOCAM—we ensured our team was edified with the technical precision required to serve with dignity and "Do No Harm."

In 2024, our vision expanded beyond the borders of Cameroon. Leveraging technology to "freeze" geographic space, we launched cross-national programs with partners in Sierra Leone. This digital bridge allowed us to facilitate Pan-African knowledge sharing, proving that feminist solidarity is not bound by physical territory. Whether in a local "Njangi" house in Mile 16 or a virtual seminar across the continent, GGF remains dedicated to a model of partnership that is inclusive, transparent, and relentlessly focused on the voices of those we serve.

GGF 2024 Activity & Partnership Roadmap

Month	Activity Title	Partner Organization(s)	Primary Focus Area
February	Valentine Outreach: "Cherishing Childhood – Nurturing Resilience through Play"	Lead Child Africa	Menstrual Health, Puberty Education & Play Therapy
February	Skill Acquisition Program for Persons with Disabilities (PWDs)	Tendo's Foundation	Economic Empowerment & Vocational Training (Pastry)
March	SUVAR 2024 Conference: Survivor Voices Against Rape	Rescue Women Cameroon (REVOCAM)	Institutional Capacity Building & SGBV Protocols
July	Community Prevention of Rape: Strategic Advocacy in Crisis Zones	Hope In Pink, Hope Fountains & Taxi Drivers Union	SGBV Prevention & "First Responder" Training
August	International Youth Day: Bridging the Digital Divide	Gender Equality for Good Governance Sierra Leone	Digital Literacy & Entrepreneurship
September	Back to School Support: Ensuring Educational Equity	Lead Child Africa, Wem'Afrika & Blissful Hearts Foundation	Material Support & Psychosocial Reintegration
October	International Day of the Girl Child: Girls' Vision for the Future	Female and More Organization	GBV Prevention, Period Poverty & Academic Discipline
November	UNICEF AAP-SOP Training for CSOs in the Southwest	UNICEF Cameroon	Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) & Governance
December	Year-End Outreach: Protection During Festivities	Lead Child Africa & Wem'Afrika	SRHR, Mental Health & Community Needs Consultation

At the Gracious Gifters Foundation, we know that we are only as strong as the community we build. To our 2024 collaborators: thank you for walking alongside us, for sharing your resources, and for trusting in our shared vision of a more equitable Southwest Region.



With Gratitude to Our Collaborators:

- **UNICEF Cameroon:** For elevating our standards of accountability and institutional excellence.
- **Lead Child Africa:** Our constant ally in protecting the joy and health of the children in Buea and Limbe.
- **Rescue Women Cameroon (REVOCAM):** For guiding our path toward survivor-centric SGBV advocacy.
- **Tendo's Foundation:** For partnering with us to break the barriers of economic exclusion for PWDs.
- **Wem'Afrika & Blissful Hearts Foundation:** For your tireless energy in our joint community outreaches and back-to-school initiatives.
- **Female and More Organization:** For helping us spark the leadership fire in the next generation of girls.
- **Gender Equality for Good Governance (Sierra Leone):** For proving that technology can bridge borders and unite African youth.
- **Hope In Pink & Hope Fountains:** For standing on the front lines of rape prevention in our most vulnerable communities.
- **The Taxi Drivers Union & Mt. Cameroon FM:** For turning the streets and the airwaves into a shield of protection.

Our Statement of Commitment for 2025

As we move forward, the Gracious Gifters Foundation remains committed to the following Feminist Partnership Principles:

1. **Shared Power:** We commit to horizontal relationships where every partner—regardless of size—has a seat at the table.
2. **Mutual Accountability:** We are accountable not just to our donors, but first and foremost to the communities we serve and the partners we work with.
3. **Resource Equity:** We will continue to advocate for the fair distribution of resources, ensuring that grassroots knowledge is valued as much as technical expertise.
4. **Collective Care:** We pledge to foster environments of safety and well-being for our staff and partners, recognizing that we cannot pour from an empty cup.

Together, we are not just providing aid; we are building a movement



CHAPTER FOUR

OPERATIONAL CHALLENGES, EMERGENT ISSUES, AND STRATEGIC LESSONS LEARNED

Gracious Gifters Foundation (GGF) throughout 2024 navigated a complex humanitarian landscape. While the year was defined by significant impact, several systemic challenges and emergent issues surfaced that shaped the foundation’s operational reality.

The following table categorizes these obstacles to provide a strategic overview for institutional learning and future planning.

GGF 2024: Challenges and Emergent Issues

Category	Specific Challenge / Emergent Issue	Contextual Impact
Security & Conflict	<i>Surge in Sexual Violence & Abductions</i>	The ongoing crisis in the Southwest/Northwest led to an alarming rise in physical assault, necessitating the urgent "First Responder" advocacy in July.
Social & Cultural	Deep-Seated SGBV & Period Stigma	Prevailing silence and shame around menstruation and sexual abuse acted as barriers to school attendance and disclosure of crimes.
Economic Barriers	Financial Exclusion of PWDs	Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) faced a severe "financial gap," making them more vulnerable to poverty and requiring the provision of both training and startup kits.
Digital Divide	Technological Passivity	African youth were identified as "passive consumers" rather than innovators, highlighting a critical need for digital entrepreneurship as a tool for survival.
Education Gaps	Trauma-Induced Absenteeism	Displacement caused more than just a lack of books; trauma and "poverty of aspiration" (procrastination/fear) were invisible barriers to student performance.
Operational/Logistics	Hard-to-Reach "Crisis Zones"	Areas like Mile 14 and Mile 16 are often bypassed by standard programs, requiring GGF to use mobile transit (taxis) to penetrate these zones.

Institutional	Standardization Requirements	The need to transition from a grassroots responder to a "common language" partner with UN agencies required intensive staff training in AAP and SOPs.
Environmental	Hygienic Waste Management	An emergent issue during the Girl Child seminar was the environmental and health risk of improper sanitary product disposal in schools.

Strategic Response & Lessons Learned

1. **From Silence to Advocacy:** GGF learned that in conflict zones, awareness is not enough. Transitioning to a "First Responder" concept—training ordinary citizens to handle disclosures—was a necessary pivot to break the silence.
2. **Addressing the "Whole Person":** The "Back to School" and "Girl Child" programs highlighted that material aid (pads/bags) must be paired with psychosocial support and mental discipline (overcoming procrastination) to be effective.
3. **Collaborative Efficiency:** Facing "scarce resources," GGF successfully utilized consortium-based outreach (e.g., partnering with Lead Child Africa and Wem’Afrika) to minimize duplication and maximize reach.
4. **Institutional Resilience:** Participation in UNICEF AAP-SOP training was a response to the emergent need for higher accountability, ensuring that community feedback directly shapes the 2025 agenda.

Contact Us

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