

OUTREACH TO THE LESS PRIVILEGED OF CAMEROON – AFRICA THROUGH MEDICAL CAMPAIGNS AND HEALTH ASSISTANCE, October 2020

Introduction: It has not very common for Piarists to be involved in the medical domain. Those who know the Piarists would more readily associate with them educational works. That notwithstanding, here comes an annual report on health activities carried out by the Piarists and collaborators:



Context: background and justification

- i. *Health plays a role in Education:* As a matter of fact, necessity on the ground has imposed the need to attend to the vulnerable whose cry for medical assistance has been increasing notable especially in the educational institutions and pastoral units we administered in rural areas. Within a period of less than 9 months a college alone registered 3 deaths.
- ii. *Remote Access to Health Services:* For the past 33 years that Piarists have been working in Cameroon, we have been in touch with the realities of many rural communities where accessibility to health facilities and medical attention has been an uphill task. Of the 10 primary schools we run, 8 are strictly in remote communities where neither education nor health are priorities. What characterizes most of these areas are traditional believers, funeral practices and early marriages especially for the girl child. This alone makes health a big challenge.
- iii. *Worsening Situations in the English-Speaking Regions.*

Activities carried out



Dr. Axel conducting a check up

Given the above background, the Piarists in collaboration with a group of young medical personnel's, initiated a project in 2017 known as "Medical Campaigns" (Journée Médicales). This project seeks to provide medical care and attention to the less privileged especial in remote communities, through consultations, provision of medications, counselling, and health education.

The first outreach was at a rural community called Bamendjou, located in the West Region of Cameroon with a population of 34269 inhabitants and is witnessing a relative high right of mortality and high rate of illiteracy. The following year, it moved to Bafia.

This year, precisely from **15 to 18 October 2020**, the medical campaigns took place in another rural community of the Western Region known as Bandjoun, under the leadership of the Provincial Superior Fr. Evaristus Akem Sch.P. The project this year saw the participation of 765 persons majority of whom were children (454) and women (185).

Challenges and Future Projections

The project focuses on the most vulnerable who very often have little or no access to health facilities and attention. For this to be effective, they receive medical treatment and drugs free of charge. As mentioned in the introduction, this activity is just an extra-mile to in a bid to improve the already precarious health situations of the less privileged. Meaning, we do not have a ready budget for the running cost and only struggle with the little we come up with, and this actually does not meet up with the needy target population. The next edition of these medical campaigns is scheduled to take place in Bamenda, North West Region of Cameroon, a locality highly affected by the Anglophone Crisis. We are targeting a population of 5000 persons. We are currently open for donations and any similar support including but not limited to relevant medical equipment.

Conclusion

Moved by the conviction that we share the same humanity and inspired by evangelical values of charity, we strive as much as we can to be of help to the less privileged in a bit to give them the dignity they deserve as human. While thanking our benefactors and well-wishers for their generosity, we are open to every effort and collaboration that will contribute in assisting the poor and promoting human dignity. We share the same humanity with the poor and as Pope Francis puts it *-we are all brothers*.





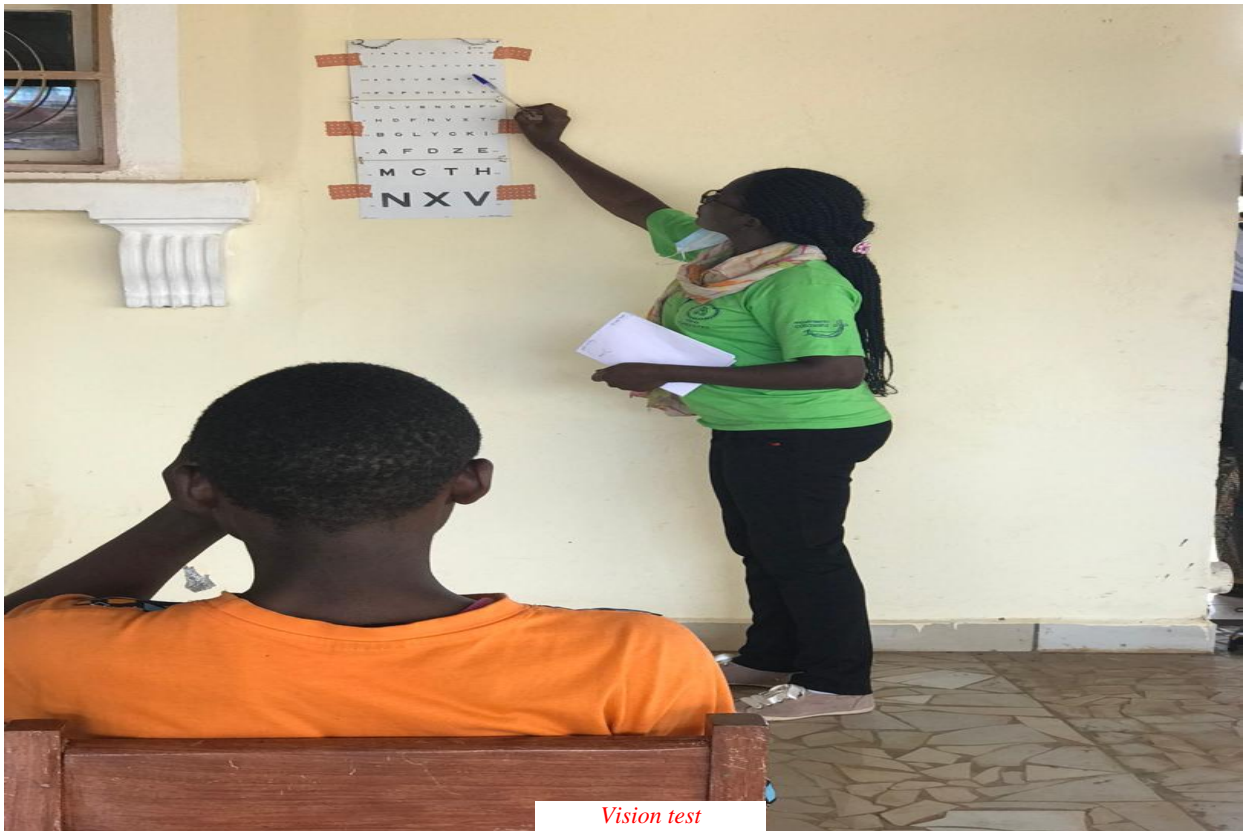
Health volunteer (Colette) at the provisional pharmacy



Medical personnel for the health campaign



Consulting a student of CTC Bandjoun



Vision test



Fr. Evaristus Akem Ndi and collaborator at the distribution point



Crossing section of the coordination team



*Paulinus Abose, Sch.P
Cameroon, Oct. 2020*