

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), (called Ngonkuma in the Bayangi dialect) questions.

What do my people, parents, friends and papers say about FGM?

FGM is an old age practice of the Manyu and Ndian division ethnic groups who numbers more than three million in population, with girls and women counting more than one million eight hundred thousand persons. In Cameroon, the female population surpasses that of males in the ratio of 5 women to 1 man.

In the days of old, no body new about this practice and its demerits, since it was and is still being done, by a particular group of people belonging to a cult. But with the advent of colonialism and civilization, followed by education and exposure, the act is now being exposed as women who have been mutilated have schooled and are now still schooling, in different universities and diversified places and studying the traditions/cultures of other people

and the anatomy and physiology of their bodies, as they come in contact every day with people from different parts of the world and read books, see television and listen to news.

So my people, parents, friends and papers are condemning the act awfully, but this is mostly done in towns and environments where the tribes performing this act are not located. As for news papers and magazines, they write a lot to condemn this act, but how many of the villages or villagers and the perpetrators, promoting this act know how to read or write, let alone to be buying news papers that are very costly now in Cameroon or have televisions and radios, let alone internet?

A lot of films have been acted to expose the devilish act, but again how many of these villagers have decks or TV to watch and how many of these villages have electricity? You see most of the villages practicing this act are in the forest and their villages are inaccessible mostly in the rainy season. They don't have roads but footpaths,

running through the dense evergreen, virgin rain forest, filled with all kind of wildlife and rare species of animals and plants endemic to it. You know it's in korup rain forest pack, that the plant purported to have a substance that can be researched to cure AIDS, but its poisonous to man is found and its called ancestocladus corupensis.

So the papers and town inhabitants are doing their best but not much, because this act is practiced by illiterate population of the virgin, ever green rain forest regions of Ndian and Manyu divisions, inhabiting the Korup reserved rain forest Pack. But presently the act has been banned by the United Nations Organization and the law is fully respected by our country.

You see women have a little to say about FGM, because they are being marginalised by the men perpetrating this act. So the only way to make them resist this act is by empowering them, so that they can stand against it. If not so, since they depend on their men for their livelihood and sustainability, FGM will hardly stop in these villages unless

the government uses violent means which they have planned to use. But who is courageous enough to report these perpetrators without being afraid of witchcraft?

You might not know what witchcraft is all about or believe in it, but take it from me that its real, as a lot of people have been affected by it, so every one is afraid to point a finger on the perpetrators, who actually belong to the sect, because they are afraid to die or to be harmed by them.

Do they teach about it in schools?

For now no, but teachers always mention it in their lessons. Like me I am a biology teacher in Government Bilingual High school Molyko Buea. So what I do is, I always make mention of it and condemn it, when ever am teaching any lesson that has anything to do with reproduction, deceases, HIV/AIDS, general health hazards and human body/human and women relations, cultures and traditions. But for now it's not in any school

curriculum or our government educational scheme nor syllabus.

But what I advocated in our last provincial biology meeting was that, it and other controversial issues like human/women rights education, should be taught in schools, for I have a well designed project/program, for human rights education in schools (if you are interested in it and can help me search for funding I shall forward it to you).

How wide spread is the practice and how many are there?

This satanic, primitive, barbaric and infectious act is solely being practiced by two major ethnic groups in Cameroon, (that is the people of Manyu division called the Bayangis and Ejagam) and the people of Ndian division (the Orokos).

These two major ethnic groups have a population of more than three million people, with girls and women dominating, living in more than 100 minute tiny linear settlement villages, in the ever green korup, virgin rain forest. So this practice is widely spread amongst these primitive ethnic groups, since most if not all of them have this sect.

Could I explain more about cultural week? Yes why not.

Cultural week as the name denotes, is the period when most tribes in Cameroon exhibits their traditions and cultures, they do it mostly during the dry season and in the month of December, when there are no rains and the whether is dry, when all schools most have vacated. It's punctuated with a lot of fisting and festivities.

Its worthy to mention here that during this holydays period, most parents take their children back home to make them know their village and to introduce them to

their grand parents, aunties and other relatives and to make them try to learn the dialect, traditions and cultures of their four fathers and ancestors.

So Christmas holidays in Cameroonian villages is very pleasant and a time to create acquaintances, reflect and story telling. For it's during this period that the town/city children and duellers learn about their inheritance and that of their parents.

So during this period, a week is being programmed with a lot of cultural and traditional activities to take place. The activities ranges from, cleaning up campaigns, competitions on; traditional/masquerade dancing, singing, swimming in villages that have water and wrestling.

It's during this cultural week that all types of traditions and cultures are being performed. But FGM is done only to girls secretly by people of a particular sect or cult. But when they are going to perform their barbaric act, the girls are dressed specially, painted and paraded on a good

day in front of the village square, to make it look important and they are being lead by masquerades and drumming as the dance to the tune, smiling and looking attractive (without knowing how painful it is and what is all about).

Do I know what is said in their devilish lectures?

All what they say is, they try to brain wash them, by making FGM looks like something that most be done to clean the female child before she can ever get married (that is they make it looks like baptism).

They also tell them that, if they are mutilated their chances of having reach, deserving and caring husbands is very high and that it makes them brighter, attractive and charming.

They also tell them that most girls who are not mutilated end up being like prostitutes and shall never get married, especially to their tribe's men, who they deceive them, are

more kin to marry but mutilated women, who bring them good luck because of their cleansing.

They also tell them that it's a very big pride to you and your family if you are mutilated and that you and your family are highly respected.

Yes dear Urma you see, this issue is a very big and controversial subject in Cameroon as it sparks a lot of arguments amongst villagers and intellectuals of tribes practicing FGM. Even some intellectuals, believe that it's a good tradition and so most continue.

You know to change tradition is not a thing for a day and most be done gradually, patiently, meticulously and with tact, trying not to hurt any party, but using intellect and understanding of the people to try to educate them to stop it.

But in truth the men who promote FGM do it for selfish reasons and the women are only following the men and

believing in them because of poverty, since they can contribute anything so too they cannot speak. Being uneducated, the men think that the only way they can control their wives sex libido, is to mutilate them since they know it well that the clitoris is very sensitive to sex. So they remove it intentionally to reduce the women desire for sex, thinking that it prevents them from going outside and from becoming prostitutes.

Our organization called Practical Association (PRACASS), has done a lot of investigation and research in this field and others, until we have written a true story, though spiced on how one girl helped to stop this practice in their village.

The story is entitled "The Courageous Girl", whose abstract I have sent to you, if you are interested in it and can help me search for funding to publish it, I shall send it to you.

You see if we produce and publish it, it shall go along way to help in educating the youths and the entire populace on the ills of FGM and we can lobby our government to put the book as one of their literature books to be read from forms one to five.

We have also planned that if we win with this story, we shall take the risk and use the money to go and start organizing educational lectures/campaigns, using films in villages still under taking FGM.

Please I hope I have exhausted your questions if not, ask more I am at your service and I want to expose this inhuman, barbaric, deceases spreading and satanic practice amongst my people, in order to try and stop it.

Now let me answer that for Election Related Violence

How does abuse of right stems from poor communication and community information systems?

Communication is the sum total of all communication means and instruments put together, to transmit information or messages to people. The most available and cheapest means to acquire information is the radio, mostly in villages where the people can't read or write but at list can hear their vernacular.

You see in Cameroon, most dialects are spoken over our national and some community radios in specific programs to transmit particular messages on fixed days at list once a week. Our radios are highly under censors by our government, who instruct and make sure that the radios transmit only messages which they want the people to hear. Because of these the type and kind of information that get to us, are all censored to protect them in power and in so doing the populace is hardly being given useful information during crucial periods and in record time.

You know election rigging that mostly courses violence, starts from the inception of registration, during voting, counting and declaration of results. That's why I have entitled this revised version to Election Related Fraud and Violence, for its fraud that courses violence.

What they do is that they instruct the radios to start announcing election registration only a few weeks to closing date, so that most people will not register only their own members, who even register on the voting day and after the day in secrete places and in private residences.

During counting wrong information is transmitted from one part of the country to the other and to the entire world (like Robert Mugabe's of Zimbabwe), by their censored radios to keep them in power and blindfold the globe that they are winning, when it's actually fraud.

As for the other means of communication which are more reliable like cable TV network, internet and phones, they are very scarce and expensive to manage, so most of the time our poor villagers and urban poor populations depends on the poor radio information system to understand many activities, as for internet services that's reserved only for intellectuals and the reach, up till date most village inhabitants and urban poor populations, when they see computers they call it television, because of the screens at list televisions are older in discovery and more common in Cameroon than computers.

So if you are refused information on what is happening around you and the world or on when and how to participate in elections or your countries Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (PRSP), how can you now say you are a Cameroonian, when you know nothing about your country?

Are all these not abuse of human rights to information and contribution to nation building? During elections, the

electorate don't even know the colours of ballot papers, representing the different political parties, because we are not shown or educated on it and these is done intentionally to frustrate the so called opposition, which have their majority following amongst the highly populated illiterate population. We don't even know sometimes where to go and vote since our names are distributed arbitrary and unannounced in any radio or media.

What are current communication and information system?

These are the new discoveries in the field of communication and includes, satellite TVs, cable network, internet, cell phones with all their cheap means of transmitting messages like SMS, internet calls, e-mails etc. but all this means are still farfetched amongst Cameroonians who can't afford to pay for it now, due to poverty coursed by our leaders mismanagement and

embezzlement and their policy to keep the people out of useful information.

Why does the public don't have sufficient information and access to the text that guides the conduct of elections. Is it as a result of lack of privilege and or lack of technology?

Yes it's partly as a result of lack of privilege and technology, but it's intentional by the system, so that they shall not know their rights as far as elections and other important issues like PRSP are concern. You know if you know nothing you cannot vouch, advocate or fight for it.

So if we talked of privilege is part of it because the people of the ruling party are all privileged to have the text, but again its favouritism, discrimination and marginalisation to give it only to them. The ruling party wilfully refuse even the press or bookshops, to sell it for it's very difficult to see any copy unless you belong or join them. So again this confirms that it's privileged.

Lack of technology is not directly the point but lack of the willingness to educate the populace on text guiding elections. Because over the internet you will never find it, but there are different things which the government deems necessary and so sent it to the internet.

But again even if it's put in the internet how many Cameroonians have access to the internet or know how to brause it? So the only way to do it is to take the information through lectures to the people, use their vernacular programs over the radios and educate them on it. But will the authorities that be and want to remain in power allow it? Food for thought, in African systems, where rulers wants to become monarchs or convert their countries to chiefdoms?

All the above happenings, are making Cameroon very fragile to civil war, as we all know, were the people are refused their civil rights to vote so as to take part in decision making, many terrible things can happen as was in South Africa during the Apartheid regime, Nigeria Biafra

war, Hutus and Tutsis in Rwanda, Ivory coast, Kenya, Czechoslovakia, Somalia, Iraq, Zimbabwe, just to name a few.

Election Related Fraud and Violence (ERFV) the case of Cameroon.

ERFV started in Cameroon before independence in 1961, prior to independence, there were many political parties, but three were very outstanding that is the Cameroon People Union (UPC) headed by late Nde Ntumaza, Cameroon National Democratic Party (KNDP) headed by Late EML Endely and Cameroon National Union (CNU) Headed by our late president Amadou Ahidjo.

All these parties represented factions of the country as they were like sectional. But the CNU was like national as it covers a wider part of the country. So prior to the plebiscite that annexed Southern Cameroon's till today to the East in the name of unification, there were many troubles as political parties were vying for leadership and

these lead to the branding of UPC patriotic followers as terrorists and they were fighting for long and many of the followers of UPC, civilians and national army were killed in the war.

But in 1961 as Cameroon was granted independence by the French, the president Amadou Ahidjo banned the UPC, beheaded some of their leaders like Umnyeombe, Felix Momie etc and caused others to flee from Cameroon. After that he banned all other political parties and asked the followers to join his ruling CNU. He ruled till 1982 that he reluctantly handed power to our present president.

During his reign there was nothing like free and fair elections, for he was never challenged by any person during presidential elections. Only parliamentarians were contested, but all the time the same parliamentarians like their president, remain in position many of them only retired after the president transferred power in 1982, even though others remain as parliamentarians,

manipulating elections through fraud and threats till their death.

The first so called real political transformation in Cameroon was in 1992, when the ruling party unenthusiastically accept multiparty, because the populace, mostly university students and youthful sympathisers, matched publicly in the capital and other 09 provinces advocating for multiparty politics. So because of the reluctance to accept it billions were destroyed in terms of lives and properties.

In 1992 the republic of Cameroon experienced in all 10 provinces a bitter transition from a one party system to a multiparty system, bitter because the ruling party undeniably did not welcome the transition. Considering that little or no campaign was set up to prepare the peoples mind, so as to control the tension, billions were destroyed in terms of properties and lose of lives.

In some provinces like in center (Yaoundé), littoral (Douala), south west (Kumba and Buea), Far North (Maroua), West (Bafussam) and North West (Bamenda), thousands of citizens staging a peaceful demonstration march pass were brutalized mercilessly by the forces of law and order under the influence of the state, resulting to ghost towns, loss of lives, injuries, destructions of public / private properties, looting, stealing and rapes of both mothers and daughters in front of their husbands, fathers, brothers and relatives, until a state of emergency was declared in Bamenda.

Again in 1997 presidential elections, the country experienced another set of election related violence. This time it culminated not only to loss of lives and property, but also to the staying away from elections by the main opposition party leading to a landslide victory by the incumbent.

So by 2002 and 2004 closed to 80% of the electoral public mostly youths, between the ages of 21 and 35 and

women, had relapsed their participation in electoral activities and political development of the countries fragile democracy.

Despite enormous efforts by patriotic Cameroonians, political parties, civil society organizations and in particular international bodies, demanding that election management should be handed over to an independent electoral body (ELECAM), the grip of the government is still seen in the management of elections under its self appointed cohorts in National Elections Observatory (NEO). Presently even the so called ELECAM to be formed shall still be appointed by the head of state, does making them loyal to him and his coyotes.

The quest for eternalized ruler ship, corruption, embezzlement and gerontocracy that has characterized the political development of the country these past years continues to threaten the state of the atmosphere during and after elections.

In 2006 internal wrangling amongst the opposition parties and particularly within the Social Democratic Front (SDF), lead to brutal fighting's amongst party militants leaving one dead, several others wounded and a broken down of the main political unit into two opposition fraternities or parties, each claiming legitimacy and credibility over the parties name SDF, until the creation of Alliance of Progressive Forces (APF) by one faction leaving SDF to the formal chairman.

Also in some sections within the ruling party, party reorganizations and preliminaries for the 2007 municipal and legislative (twin) elections, have not gone without protest, anti-protest, violence and physical abuse, within focal points in the provinces, center (Yaoundé), Littoral (Douala), North West (Bamenda) and South West (BUEA and Kumba) were mostly affected.

In the 2007 twin elections the youths showed their nonchalant nature, to register or participate in the elections, as the incumbent refused to grant an

independent electoral commission to be called ELECAM. Leading to the incumbent again sweeping 90% of the seats in the parliament and Municipalities, detentions and fighting's in voting centers (Bamenda, Kumba, Limbe and Buea) to mention a few, as the main opposition party the SDF again cries fraud and shows proves of electoral theft, saying that the elections should be counseled. Observers of International Governance Institute (IGI) Focal Integrity team Cameroon and other bodies register electoral fraud and malpractices.

Again in February 2008 we saw how Cameroonian youths went to the streets protesting for their rights, as it was rumored that the president wants to change the 1996 constitution that, gave the president a seven years term of office renewable once, to an unlimited term of office of seven years renewable unlimitedly, this lead to the destructions, by the forces of law and so call other, of youthful lives and properties wording billions of dollars. Up till now the government is still forcefully imprisoning the so-called perpetrators of the riots without fair trial.

The seriousness of the proposed constitutional change and the objections from Cameroonians raised the eyebrows of the international community. Up to the point that on the 09th / 04 / 2008, international team of diplomats in Cameroon from the Chinese, Britain, America and Japanese embassy, visited the minister of external relations and held a talk behind close doors concerning the constitutional amendments.

The great reason for our panic and fear is that finally the presidents cohort, hand clappers, parliamentarians and scout ministers, on 07th / 04 / 2008 tabled the bill in parliament to change the presidential term of office, from seven years renewable once as stated by the 1996 constitution to unlimited time.

The major opposition party the Social Democratic Front (SDF) parliamentarians did not vote and staged a walk out but yet, the bill was voted right and the president promulgated it into law on the 14th / 04 / 2008, to the

objection of all Cameroonians, with military men floating in all the major cities and towns in Cameroon to intimidate the youths and citizens.

But the greatest question here is that will these last for ever? How long can a man keep deceiving and suffering his own kens men? How did Rwanda, Burundi, Defoe in Sudan, Palestine, Iraq, Somalia, Czechoslovakia, Ivory Coast, Chad, Kenya, Zimbabwe etc all stated?

So the president, has proven to Cameroonians and the world that he wants to turn Cameroon into a military monarchy, since he is the chief of arm forces and can always rig elections, especially now that the Cameroonian youths know that their votes does not count.

If we are not careful to allow the youths through educational trainings know their rights, on how to register to vote and to be voted, for them to be involve in decision making, then they can resolve to any other means, to speak their mind which might be very dangerous not only

to Cameroon, but the entire region and the globe since no wars has ended without refugees with their related complications of illnesses, hunger, malnutrition etc.

What do we think about a violent youth-led outbreak? Our parents, friends and papers?

What we are afraid of is the forth coming presidential election in 2011, especially now that the constitution has been changed making him a monarch or life president. The last riots in February 2008 showed and proved to the world that, Cameroon may go into a terrible civil war if something is not done.

What our parents and friends are saying is that, we are very afraid of the coming 2011 presidential election and that any youth-led outbreak again may result into a devastating civil war, with no clear cut enemies, boundaries or fronts. You know Cameroon has more than 255 ethnic groups, with each having its own national enemies and shouldering its own grudges.

For our papers, some are very objective and are reporting the true happenings in the country, while others are pro-government and are supporting them in all their misdeeds. But all in all if something is not done before 2011 elections many terrible things may happen.

Dear Umar now you can digest all and make your conclusions as far as elections related fraud and violence and its consequences may affect Cameroon. That's why PRACASS and other organizations are trying to organise a conference entitled "1st National Conference on Campaign against Election Related Violence (CEReV)". In this Cameroonian version, (for we have an international version entitled "1st International Conference on Campaign Against Election Related Fraud and Violence (CERFV)"), we are struggling to have funds, to help us educate Cameroonians on how to handle election related fraud and violence in order to avoid future conflicts and wars.

This particular project (CEReV), has been forwarded by us to National Endowment for Democracy (NED) based in America for funding, while the international version CREFV have been proposed to Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), for funding and they say its liable for funding and that we should send it for them to concenter.

So if you and your associates please Umar desires to read them on the grounds that you shall correct and make proposals or direct us to funding organizations, I shall forward it to you ASAP, for my main aim is to help cub terrible situations in the world.

The global objective for CERFV is to;

- Create a network movement of youths like human right movements spreading the ideas of CERFV.
- Construct a website with passed history and latest news on election related fraud and violence and

- Advocate for United Nations Organization to commemorate a day like labour, women days etc for CERFV to be observed prayerfully yearly by all nations, flying their flags half in memory of all those who most have died because of related fraud and violence.

Good day, its here I end and again forward to you another research entitled "Forceful Polygamous marriages in the North West and Western regions or provinces in Cameroon".