

**13th session/ Regional meetings of the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.**

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Due to Covid-19 pandemic spread to people in close contact, it has caused a global, social, and economic disruptions in the lives of indigenous peoples. The Mbororo communities and pygmies in Cameroon have been facing challenges related to the access to basic social facilities.

The indigenous communities in Cameroon are severely affected by the current crisis. The elderly, those with pre-existing health conditions and compromised immune systems are particularly vulnerable to serious health consequences if infected by the coronavirus. The indigenous Mbororo pastoralists in Cameroon lack adequate access to water, soap or sanitizer, Covid-19 testing facilities, health care services and information. These populations frequently suffer higher rates of chronic illnesses and underlying health conditions that place them at greater risk of developing severe health complications from Covid-19.

In Cameroon, educational institutions were closed, efforts were being made to continue teaching and learning online. These are important measures to mitigate the impact of these closures on the right to education. However, they also carry the risk of deepening educational inequalities between the mainstream communities and the indigenous people's learners due to unequal access to affordable internet services and equipment such as Televisions, computers, smart phones and tablets.

The Covid-19 pandemic also threatens to deepen gender inequalities as the burden of caring for children at home and sick or elderly family members falls disproportionately on women given the still deeply embedded gender stereotypes and roles in many societies. In circumstances where families are in lock down or quarantine, women may be additionally vulnerable to domestic violence, and have limited recourse in these circumstances.

Covid-19 has affected the economic, social and cultural activities of the indigenous communities in Cameroon since there were a lot of restrictions and shut down with all markets closed.

It should be noted that at the break of Covid-19 indigenous Mbororo pastoralists and pygmies were using traditional herbs to prevent themselves from Covid-19 and some they use that if you get Covid-19 it will cleaned off.

In another note, the Mbororo community living in conflict-affected regions (Secessionist) in the North West and South West regions of Cameroon for the past four years are particularly vulnerable during this crisis. Their homes were destroyed, cattle seized and Mbororo people kidnapped for ransoms. For the past for years their children have gone to school. If they try, they will kidnap their children and kill them.