



ASSOCIATION FOR THE WELFARE OF ALBINOS (AWA)

Bamenda, North West Region, Cameroon

END-OF-YEAR REPORT

2023

Different colours, one people



AWA members and partners with products made during an AWA production training, 2023

Document Information

	Name	Title	Date
Prepared by	Ngom Maceline Anwi	Founder and Executive Director	4 December 2023
	Chobah Vivian	Secretary General	4 December 2023
Approved by	Nchini Terence Abongwa Sandra Doekorley Fisiy Fabrice Gibbi Sabally Modelina Heart Lyle Dennis	Board of Directors	28 December 2023

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1. Executive Summary

In 2023, the Association for the Welfare of Albinos (AWA) continued its mission of improving the lives of persons with albinism and other vulnerable people in the North West Region of Cameroon. The year's work covered six areas: **healthcare, education, arts, crafts and livelihoods, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), protection and empowerment, and environmental sustainability.**

Key achievements in 2023 included:

- **Health:** distribution of sanitary products and menstrual-hygiene workshops for women with albinism and other vulnerable women, including training in making reusable sanitary pads; production and distribution of **100 medicated soap bars** in remote communities (Bamunka in Ndop, Njikwa and Kambe), combined with awareness sessions on climate change and skin cancer.
- **Education:** inclusion sessions with St. Theresa Primary School and Practising School Groups 1 and 2, training teachers on seating, lighting and stigma prevention; a public-speaking session to build the confidence of young persons with albinism.
- **Awareness:** radio and television programmes on CRTV, Abakwa Radio, Afrique Nouvelle Radio and Star TV.
- **Talents and livelihoods:** celebration of **International Albinism Awareness Day (13 June 2023)** with a talent show and trade fair; training of mothers with albinism in producing powder soap, bleach, baskets and other products; production of the awareness film "**Decline**".
- **Networks and advocacy:** participation in World Humanitarian Day, Global Handwashing Day, a UNSCR 2250 youth, peace and security workshop, a UN Human Rights workshop on human rights defenders, and the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.
- **Finances:** recorded income of 700,000 FCFA against expenditure of 2,205,200 FCFA. The difference of 1,505,200 FCFA was covered by advances from the Executive Director (see section 8).

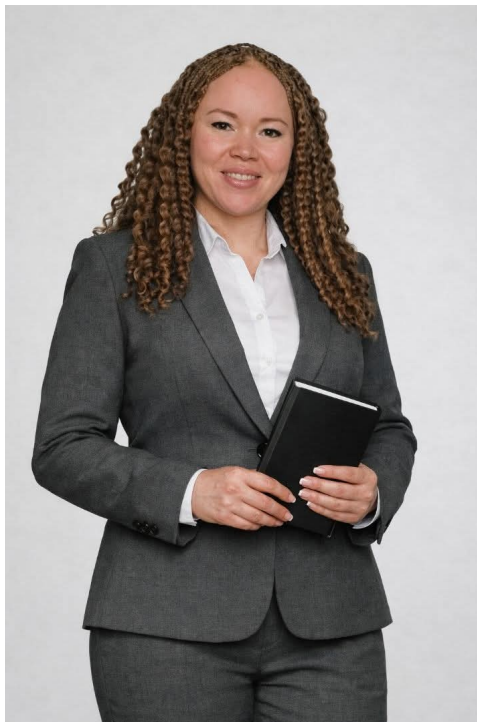
These activities reached 500+ people across 6 communities. AWA thanks all its partners, volunteers and members, whose commitment made this progress possible.

2. Message from the Founder and Executive Director

The growth of our organisation is more than a statement; it reflects our shared vision and our commitment to making a real difference in our community. Over the years, we have grown from a small group of passionate individuals into a network dedicated to positive change. Our journey has had its challenges, but the resilience, creativity and unwavering support of our team and partners have carried us forward.

As we look to the future, we are excited to expand our initiatives, deepen our outreach and keep innovating to meet the changing needs of the people we serve. Our mission remains steadfast: to empower individuals, uplift communities and open pathways to a dignified, self-reliant life. We believe that every person has the potential to achieve greatness, and it is our privilege to help unlock that potential.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your support and dedication drive our progress, and together we will continue to make a difference, one step at a time.



Ngom Maceline Anwi

Founder and Executive Director, Association for the Welfare of Albinos

3. About AWA

Who we are

AWA is a non-political, non-tribal, non-religious and non-profit association. We support and counsel persons with albinism, orphans, persons with physical disabilities, widows, widowers and older persons, with a special focus on persons with albinism.

AWA was created on **5 November 2016** and legally registered on **23 April 2019**. Our head office is opposite Upper Bayelle, Mile 2 Nkwen, Bamenda III. The association is run by volunteers elected by the General Assembly, who serve as President, Secretary General, Treasurer and Public Relations Officer.

Vision

A world free from colour stigmatization, with equal opportunities for all.

Mission

To improve the quality of life of persons with albinism and other vulnerable and physically challenged persons, mentally, physically and psychologically, and to promote their full participation in community development.

Motto	Slogan
Different colours, one people	United together, success for all

Objectives

AWA works to:

1. Empower persons with albinism to be productive, independent and self-reliant through training in locally made products such as powder soap and bar soap.
2. Promote their social and economic integration through training in income-generating activities such as hairdressing and tailoring.
3. Raise awareness of the importance of education and provide material and financial support so that learners with albinism can succeed.
4. Encourage participation in social activities, including sports and community gatherings.
5. Advocate for the rights of persons with albinism and persons with physical disabilities.
6. Promote sustainable agricultural practices, including protected (indoor) farming.
7. Create safe, UV-protected spaces where persons with albinism can work, learn and socialise.
8. Establish mentorship programmes that pair experienced professionals with persons with albinism.

9. Develop partnerships with businesses and organisations to create inclusive job opportunities.
10. Promote artistic and cultural expression through music, art, writing and performance.
11. Facilitate access to healthcare, including regular skin (dermatological) check-ups and eye care.
12. Run community education programmes that dispel myths about albinism.
13. Support research that improves understanding of albinism and the quality of life of those affected.

4. Activities Carried Out in 2023

In 2023, AWA worked in six areas: health; education; skills and livelihoods; water, sanitation and hygiene; protection and empowerment; and environmental sustainability. The main activities are presented below, each with photos from the activity.

4.1 Health

Objectives

- Launch or join campaigns to prevent skin cancer and other health risks faced by persons with albinism.
- Raise awareness of the importance of regular eye, skin and general health check-ups.
- Work with public health authorities and providers so that healthcare is accessible and affordable for persons with albinism.

Menstrual hygiene and dignity for women with albinism

Many women with albinism and other vulnerable women struggle to afford sanitary products and lack information on menstrual health. AWA provided sanitary products to 10 women and held workshops on menstrual health and self-care. The sessions gave women knowledge about their bodies and how to care for their health with dignity, and created a safe space where they could share their experiences and break the silence and stigma around menstruation.

To make the solution sustainable, AWA also taught women how to make **reusable sanitary pads**, a skill that ensures long-term access to menstrual products and can generate income.



Women with albinism and other vulnerable women at an AWA menstrual hygiene session.

Medicated soap for sun and skin protection

AWA produced **100 bars of medicated soap** and distributed them in remote communities, including **Bamunka (Ndop), Njikwa and Kambe**. The soap helps prevent sunburn, treats skin rashes and supports skin-cancer prevention. Because many persons with albinism in these areas are farmers who work long hours in the sun, AWA also held awareness sessions on climate change and its link to skin cancer.



Families and a child with albinism receiving medicated soap.

4.2 Education

Objectives

- Ensure that persons with albinism receive quality education in a nurturing and inclusive setting.
- Work with organisations and individuals to build the self-esteem of persons with albinism.
- Work with the education ministries to train teachers in inclusive practice, enlarge fonts on examination papers and include albinism in the school curriculum.

Inclusive schools

In collaboration with **St. Theresa Primary School** and **Practising School Groups 1 and 2**, AWA educated pupils and teachers about the inclusion of children with albinism. Teachers learned to understand the needs of learners with albinism, including seating close to the board, appropriate lighting and reducing glare. Pupils took part in activities that build empathy and break down prejudice, and parents were engaged through information meetings.

By making these practices part of school culture, the programme improves learning for pupils with albinism and spreads a wider message of acceptance and respect for diversity.



AWA inclusion sessions with pupils and teachers in partner primary schools.

Public speaking and confidence building

In partnership with public speaker and mentor **Mr. Oliver Nchom**, AWA hosted a public-speaking session for five participants, including four persons with albinism (two men and two women). Mr. Nchom spoke about confidence, clarity and connecting with an audience, and each participant then practised in front of the group and received personal feedback. The session built self-esteem and helped participants discover their talents.



Mentor Oliver Nchom with participants of the public-speaking session.

4.3 Skills and Livelihoods

Objective

To build practical skills and a source of income for persons with albinism through locally made products and handicrafts.

Production training for mothers with albinism

With support from the Delegation of Women's Empowerment and the Family, CUAPWD and the support of mothers with albinism among our members, AWA trained members to make **powder soap, bleach, baskets** and other products. Many persons with albinism leave school early and live in poverty, which increases their exposure to abuse, exploitation and skin disease. This training builds economic self-reliance.

The sessions included hands-on practice, mentorship and health education on skin-cancer prevention. Participants report greater self-esteem, better financial stability and a stronger sense of community, and their products are sold in local markets and at AWA events.



Members preparing products, and soaps and creams made by AWA members.



AWA members with their handmade baskets and calabashes.

4.4 Awareness and Media

Radio and television

AWA took part in radio and television discussions on **CRTV, Abakwa Radio, Afrique Nouvelle Radio and Star TV**, raising awareness of albinism, education support, healthcare, gender-based violence and social inclusion. Many children with albinism still face neglect from parents and society, and harmful myths put their safety at risk. These programmes, which also brought in health workers, educators and human rights advocates, helped to dispel myths and inform the public.



AWA members in a radio studio discussion on albinism.

Awareness film "Decline"

AWA produced the film **"Decline"**, with AWA's Founder, Ngom Maceline Anwi, as producer and **Posser Erasto** as director, in collaboration with **CJ Jacks Production** and **Government Primary School Bamenda 1**. The film tells the story of a girl with albinism who is rejected by her father and stigmatised by her classmates. With the help of a caring teacher and new friends, she finds her voice and her place in the world. "Decline" shows the power of acceptance and empathy and is used to educate audiences.



Presentation of the awareness film "Decline".

5. Commemorative Days, Workshops and Networks

International Albinism Awareness Day, 13 June 2023

AWA commemorated International Albinism Awareness Day at the **Blue Pearl Hotel, Mile 3 Nkwen, Bamenda**, under the global theme "**Inclusion is strength**". The event was organised under AWA's initiative **Promoting the Talents and Products of Persons with Albinism**, with the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family, the Cameroon Women's Network, the Blue Pearl Hotel, parents and guardians, and local leaders.

Persons with albinism, many of whom rarely have the chance to perform in public, showcased their talents in music, dance and poetry. A trade fair allowed artisans with albinism and other vulnerable people to display and sell crafts, farm products, jewellery, textiles and paintings, boosting their income. Workshops covered skin care, advocacy and vocational training, and speakers from the ministries and partner organisations delivered messages of solidarity.



AWA members and partners, and participants in the hall at the Blue Pearl Hotel, 13 June 2023.

World Humanitarian Day, 19 August 2023

AWA joined United Nations cluster partners and community-based organisations in Bamenda to commemorate World Humanitarian Day. AWA showcased its members' products and spoke about albinism inclusion, sparking conversations about diversity and acceptance and strengthening partnerships.



AWA's exhibition stand at World Humanitarian Day, Bamenda.

Global Handwashing Day, 13 October 2023

AWA joined UN WASH cluster partners and the Regional Delegation of Water and Energy at Immaculate Conception, Bamenda III, to commemorate Global Handwashing Day. Participants took part in handwashing demonstrations, educational sessions and discussions on clean water and sanitation, and pupils from local schools learned how a simple act protects their health.



An AWA member at the Global Handwashing Day event.

International Day of Persons with Disabilities, December 2023

AWA was invited by the Governor of the North West Region to the activities marking the 31st International Day of Persons with Disabilities, under the theme "United in action to rescue and achieve the SDGs for, with and by persons with disabilities". This included a press conference on 1 December and a round-table discussion on 7 December. AWA noted that persons with albinism were not sufficiently represented and called on the Government of Cameroon to adopt policies that protect the rights of persons with albinism and ensure their full inclusion.



Invitation from the Governor of the North West Region.

AWA also commemorated the day with the **Regional Delegation of Social Affairs, North West**, through radio and television programmes, a sensitisation campaign at Nkwen Market and a closing ceremony at the Regional Delegation of Social Affairs, Up Station, Bamenda.



AWA on Star TV and on radio for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

Youth, Peace and Security: UNSCR 2250 workshop, 27 May 2023

AWA took part in a workshop organised by the Network of Young Peacebuilders North West, in collaboration with Women of Hope Cameroon and LOYOC, at Mile 2 Nkwen, Bamenda. Young leaders discussed the five pillars of UN Security Council Resolution 2250: participation, protection, prevention, partnerships, and disengagement and reintegration, and how young people can take part in peacebuilding.



AWA at the youth, peace and security workshop.

Protection of human rights defenders, 12–13 July 2023

AWA took part in a two-day workshop organised by the United Nations Human Rights Office for Central Africa on the protection of human rights defenders in the North West Region. Sessions covered legal protection, digital security and building strong networks. AWA shared its experience from the field, highlighting the role of local organisations in advancing human rights.



AWA's Founder at the UN Human Rights workshop.

6. 2023 at a Glance

Indicator	Result
Medicated soap bars produced and distributed	100
Remote communities reached with soap and skin-cancer awareness	3 (Bamunka–Ndop, Njikwa, Kambe)
Partner schools in inclusion sessions	3 (St. Theresa Primary School, Practising School Groups 1 and 2)
Participants in public-speaking training	5
Media outlets used for awareness	4 (CRTV, Abakwa Radio, Afrique Nouvelle Radio, Star TV)
Women reached with sanitary products and menstrual-health workshops	10
Persons trained in soap, bleach and basket production	20

7. Partners in 2023

AWA thanks the institutions and organisations that worked with us in 2023:

- Ministry of Social Affairs and the Regional Delegation of Social Affairs, North West
- Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family
- Governor's Office, North West Region
- Regional Delegation of Water and Energy, and the UN WASH cluster
- United Nations Human Rights Office for Central Africa
- United Nations cluster partners (World Humanitarian Day)
- Cameroon Women's Network and Blue Pearl Hotel
- St. Theresa Primary School and Practising School Groups 1 and 2
- Network of Young Peacebuilders North West, Women of Hope Cameroon and LOYOC
- CJ Jacks Production and Mr. Oliver Nchom
- CRTV, Abakwa Radio, Afrique Nouvelle Radio and Star TV

8. Financial Overview

This section summarises AWA's income and expenditure for the period 1 January to 31 December 2023. All figures are in FCFA and come from AWA's 2023 income and expenditure records. Detailed records are available to partners and donors on request.

8.1 Income

Source of income	Amount (FCFA)	% of total
Donations	315,000	45.0%
Grants and stipends	290,000	41.4%
Sale of membership / ID cards	25,000	3.6%
Membership dues	70,000	10.0%
Total income	700,000	100.0%

8.2 Expenditure

Area of expenditure	Amount (FCFA)	% of total
Staff salaries (3 staff, 12 months)	900,000	40.8%
Events and commemorations (incl. IAAD)	389,000	17.6%
Administration and operations (incl. office rent)	301,500	13.7%
Communications and media	300,000	13.6%
Volunteer and staff motivation	205,000	9.3%
Transport	68,000	3.1%
Programme activities (needs assessment)	36,700	1.7%
Membership and subscriptions	5,000	0.2%
Total expenditure	2,205,200	100.0%

8.3 Financial position at 31 December 2023

Item	Amount (FCFA)
Total income	700,000
Total expenditure	2,205,200
Deficit for the year	(1,505,200)
Financed by advances from the Executive Director	1,505,200
Amount owed by AWA to the Executive Director	1,505,200

Notes on the accounts

Personnel costs. Staff salaries cover three staff members paid 25,000 FCFA each per month for 12 months (900,000 FCFA). Volunteer and staff motivation includes 15,000 FCFA per month for

volunteers over 12 months (180,000 FCFA) and a motivation payment of 25,000 FCFA to the IAAD organising committee.

Funding of the deficit. Expenditure exceeded income by 1,505,200 FCFA. This gap was covered by personal advances from the Executive Director, Ngom Maceline Anwi, to the organisation. These advances are not income: they are recorded as a debt that AWA owes to the Executive Director, to be repaid when funds allow.

Membership dues. Annual dues of 70,000 FCFA were paid by three executive board members (10,000 FCFA each), the Vice President (20,000 FCFA) and the Executive Director (20,000 FCFA). Five membership cards were also sold, for 25,000 FCFA.

What the figures show. Recorded income covered only about 32% of the cost of AWA's work in 2023. AWA's activities depended heavily on the commitment of its staff, volunteers and leadership. Stable, multi-year funding is essential to sustain and expand services for persons with albinism, as explained in the challenges below.

9. Challenges

AWA works mainly in the North West Region of Cameroon, one of the regions most affected by the ongoing socio-political crisis. The difficulties faced by the whole population are felt even more strongly by persons with albinism. The most important challenges in 2023 were:

Challenge	How it affects persons with albinism and AWA's work
Insecurity and the socio-political crisis	Violence, lockdowns ("ghost towns"), roadblocks and displacement disrupt daily life and livelihoods. Many members have been displaced or lost their income, and some remote communities are difficult and risky for our volunteers to reach, which delays or limits activities.
High visibility and vulnerability of persons with albinism	Persons with albinism are easily identified, which exposes them to stigma, discrimination and, in insecure areas, a greater risk of being targeted. Many are afraid to travel, attend school or go to markets, which limits their access to education, jobs, health services and humanitarian assistance.
Limited and irregular funding	AWA relies mostly on members' contributions, volunteers and small donations. There is no stable funding for sunscreen, medical care, school fees, transport or an office, so the need is much greater than what AWA can currently provide.
High cost of sunscreen and specialist care	Quality sunscreen, skin (dermatology) and eye care are expensive and mostly available only in larger towns. Many families cannot afford them, which increases the risk of skin cancer and visual impairment.
Exclusion from programmes and lack of data	Persons with albinism are rarely counted or specifically included in disability, development and humanitarian programmes, as AWA observed during the International Day of Persons with Disabilities. Without data, their needs are often overlooked.

10. Lessons Learned

1. **Communication builds confidence.** Training in public speaking helps persons with albinism express themselves and overcome personal challenges.
2. **Inclusive events reduce stigma.** Community events that showcase the talents of persons with albinism change public attitudes.
3. **Support enables growth.** Personal feedback and a supportive environment strengthen self-expression and community bonds.
4. **Schools drive wider change.** Inclusive practices in schools lead to acceptance of diversity in the wider community.
5. **Partnership multiplies impact.** Working with government, UN agencies and civil society strengthens advocacy and makes change sustainable.
6. **Advocacy creates responsibility.** Commemorative days inspire participants to advocate for change in their own communities.

11. Recommendations

Education and awareness

- Continue public education to dispel myths about albinism.
- Provide material and financial support so that learners with albinism can succeed in school.

Empowerment and skills

- Expand training in income-generating activities such as hairdressing, tailoring and local production.
- Establish mentorship programmes with experienced professionals.

Health and safety

- Advocate for accessible, affordable healthcare that addresses skin cancer and other albinism-related conditions.
- Create UV-protected spaces for persons with albinism to work, learn and socialise.

Social inclusion

- Encourage participation in sports, community and cultural activities.

Advocacy and rights

- Advocate for policies that protect persons with albinism from discrimination and violence and ensure their inclusion in national disability programmes.

Economic opportunities

- Partner with businesses and organisations to create inclusive job opportunities.

12. Future Plans

1. **Expand our initiatives** to reach more communities and respond to evolving needs.
2. **Healthcare:** skin-cancer prevention campaigns and partnerships with public health authorities.
3. **Inclusive education:** learning materials and support for children with albinism.
4. **Environmental sustainability:** climate awareness and sustainable practices.
5. **Empowerment and protection** of vulnerable persons.
6. **Create an AWA website** to share our work and connect with partners.
7. **Strengthen the Board of Directors** and AWA's governance.

13. Acknowledgements and Contact

AWA sincerely thanks its members, volunteers, partners, the media and everyone who supported persons with albinism in 2023. Together, we are building a society where everyone, whatever the colour of their skin, lives with dignity and equal opportunity.

Association for the Welfare of Albinos (AWA)

Address: Mile 2 Nkwen, Bamenda III, North West Region, Cameroon

Phone: +237 674 715 263 | +237 640 301 838

Email: awaalbinism@gmail.com | contact@awaforcharity.org

Website: <https://awaforcharity.org>

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