

Cameroon: 160 Commonwealth Point of Light

World news story

Etong Fanny Bessem recognised for improving access to healthcare in Cameroon amidst COVID-19.



With thanks to Favour Low-Cost Health Care Foundation Cameroon, in which Etong Fanny Bessem is both Co-founder and Executive Director, she has been working to improve access to healthcare as well as carrying out humanitarian interventions in various local communities in Cameroon especially in the Southwest, West and Centre regions.

These include providing free medical equipment and over 2,000 items of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to health workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Her team has reached out to over twenty thousand people across the country. She is also a member of the Women Mediators Across the Commonwealth network, which aims to increase the participation of women from the Commonwealth in mediation at all levels.

Etong Fanny Bessem received her physical certificate from the British High Commissioner to Cameroon, Rowan Laxton, during an event that coincided with the visit of the FCDO Minister for Africa, James Duddridge MP.

Etong Fanny Bessem said:

This award is for my team who volunteer their time and resources to make sure the vulnerable have free healthcare services. To think, just one month from giving birth at the peak of COVID-19, I was in the field with my team responding to COVID-19, distributing and educating the population, giving free ANC to pregnant internally-displaced women and delivering their babies – and someone was watching our effort. I can go on and on, but thank you to the British High Commissioner for putting a huge smile on our faces with this recognition. I thank our partners and international

partners for supporting my call when our country needed it most.

Working as a female volunteer in Cameroon is interesting and also challenging. With the ongoing crisis in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon, access to quality health care in rural areas especially, has become a major challenge. Poor road networks, high costs to health care, restrictions in people's movements due to the crisis and now the COVID-19 pandemic. My team and I could do more if we received more support to our work in terms of financial, material and human support.

Published 31 March 2021