

## Prize for Women's Creativity in Rural Life



14 Laureates awarded in 2007

"Promoting Women's rights"



Africa ⇒ Cameroon

**Cameroon Young Jurists Legal Resource Center (CYJULERC)**

**Giving women hope for the future**

CYJULERC, unique among Cameroon's women's organizations, is comprised of professional jurists focusing on improving the lives of rural women and children. The organization has exhibited exceptional courage and creativity in the long-term strategic projects it has initiated. The impact of CYJULERC's work extends from grassroots communities to the highest policy level of the Cameroonian society (Ministries and Parliament). Below are two examples:

**A "Ten Year Campaign for the Eradication of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in Cameroon".** The eradication of FGM was socially neglected in Cameroon despite the WHO statistics revealing that 20% of women still undergo FGM in the country. The project started with intensive awareness-raising campaigns at the grassroots level. CYJULERC collected testimonies of victims and practitioners from the field and presented these testimonies to some of the female members of parliament who were in tears upon hearing them. They also presented a draft law against FGM to be tabled for adoption. The law is still pending at the National Assembly (March 2007).

**Environmental Protection and Economic Empowerment.** CYJULERC conceived an income-generating activity that involves women in forest conservation, provides protein for their households, and also provides an alternative source of income to FGM practitioners. Snail farming was initiated to replace the source of income usually generated from the practice of FGM. Due to an overwhelming response and a lack of a regular and affordable sources of protein, it was not feasible to limit the project to FGM practitioners only. It has since become a project that helps women in providing food for household consumption and in improving the quality of their lives.