



A REPORT

ON THE COMMEMORATION OF WORLD BREAST
CANCER AWARENESS MONTH 2025

Reconciliation and Development Association (RADA)
In Collaboration with the Peter Bryan Onco Health Initiative
(PBOHI)



Northwest Region – Bamenda,
Cameroon

October 1–31, 2025

www.recdev.org



Introduction

Breast cancer remains the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women worldwide, with an estimated 2.29 million new cases recorded in 2022, representing nearly 24% of all cancers affecting women. While high-income countries have made significant strides in early detection and survivorship, vast disparities continue to exist, leaving many populations vulnerable to late-stage diagnoses and high mortality rates.

Sub-Saharan Africa faces a particularly daunting breast cancer crisis. More than 70% of cases in the region are diagnosed at late stages, with survival rates often below 50%. Cultural stigma, myths surrounding cancer, limited access to screening and oncology services, and the compounded effects of poverty and conflict significantly hinder early detection and timely treatment. These factors contribute to some of the highest breast cancer mortality rates in the world, despite lower overall incidence compared to other regions.

Cameroon reflects these regional challenges, with breast cancer identified as one of the leading cancers affecting women under the National Strategic Plan for Cancer Prevention and Control (2020–2024). The Northwest Region, in particular, recorded the highest number of suspected cases in the country, totaling 1,120 according to DHIS 2018. Alarmingly, over 90% of breast cancer cases in Cameroon are diagnosed at advanced stages (Stage III or IV), largely due to low awareness, limited practice of self-examination, strong cultural misconceptions, high treatment costs, and restricted access to health services exacerbated by insecurity.

In response to these challenges, the Reconciliation and Development Association (RADA), in partnership with the Peter Bryan Onco Health Initiative (PBOHI), implemented a month-long campaign during Pink October 2025 to raise awareness, promote early detection, and reduce stigma surrounding breast cancer. The campaign employed a multi-faceted approach including daily educational content in English and Pidgin, radio and television sensitization, survivor storytelling, and WhatsApp broadcasts targeting internally displaced persons and women in hard-to-reach areas. Despite conflict and mobility restrictions, these efforts ensured that life-saving breast health information reached women and families across the Northwest Region.

Campaign Objectives

The campaign was designed to achieve several key objectives:

- Increasing awareness of breast cancer risks, symptoms, and early detection methods;
- Promoting monthly breast self-examination (BSE);
- Debunking myths and reducing stigma;
- Highlighting survivor stories to strengthen hope;
- Reaching at least 5,000 people online and thousands more through radio and TV;
- Normalizing conversations about breast health in conflict-affected zones.

Target Audience

The campaign targeted women aged 18–60, particularly those living in insecure or underserved communities, internally displaced youths and families, men as allies in health decision-making, and digital community members on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and TikTok.

Partners & Collaborators

The successful execution of the campaign was made possible through collaborations with the Peter-Bryan Onco Health Initiative, media houses including CRTV Northwest, CBC Radio, Abakwa FM, and Star TV. These partners contributed technical expertise, platform access, and community mobilization support.

Campaign Strategy Overview

To ensure consistent and accessible breast cancer education, RADA and PBOHI delivered daily content addressing what breast cancer is, risk factors, signs and symptoms, Self breast exam, treatment options, myths versus facts, survivor stories, and where to seek help. Content was published in English and Pidgin with simple illustrations and clear calls to action.

Each week followed a progressive theme:

Week 1: Introduction, Breast Cancer Facts & Myths

Week 2: Signs & Symptoms

Week 3: Breast Self-Examination

Week 4: Treatment, Survivorship & Hope

WhatsApp broadcasts were used to reach women with limited internet access and extensive radio and TV engagement further expanded the campaign's reach.

Weekly Implementation

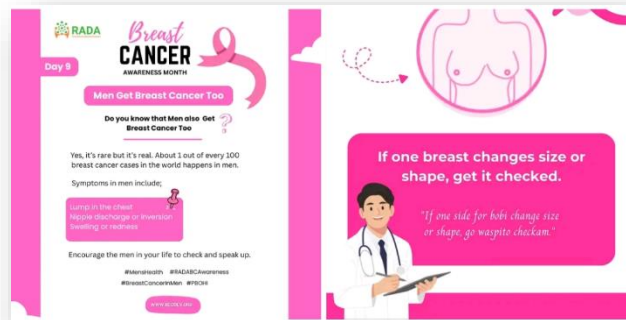
Week 1 (1–7 October): Introduction, Awareness & Myths

The first week focused on introducing Pink October and building foundational knowledge about breast cancer. RADA and PBOHI shared daily posts explaining what breast cancer is, who is at risk, and why early detection matters. The “Myth vs Fact” series addressed prevalent misconceptions, such as the belief that breast cancer is caused by curses or affects only older women. Posts were in English and Pidgin to ensure inclusiveness. Engagement was high, with many women seeking guidance through private messages.



Week 2 (8–14 October): Signs and Symptoms

This week emphasized recognizing early warning signs to encourage timely medical visits. Posts detailed breast lumps, changes in size or shape, nipple discharge, skin dimpling, swelling under the armpit, and nipple inversion. Clear explanations and illustrations helped women identify concerning changes, resulting in increased inquiries from women reporting symptoms or seeking guidance.



Week 3 (15–21 October): Breast Self-Examination (BSE)

Week 3 focused on empowering women with practical knowledge of Self breast exam. Step-by-step tutorials, including mirror checks and lying-down techniques, were shared daily. The “I Checked” Challenge encouraged women to commit to monthly self-examinations. Over 530 women pledged to monitor their breast health, sharing testimonies and motivating peers.



Week 4 (22–31 October): Treatment, Survivorship & Community Engagement

The final week focused on treatment options, survivorship, and hope. Posts explained surgery, chemotherapy, radiotherapy, hormonal therapy, and immunotherapy, along with guidance on local treatment centers. Survivor stories highlighted real experiences, reducing fear and promoting hope. Radio and TV programs amplified the messages to households without internet access.



Media Engagements (Led by RADA and PBOHI Program Leads)

The media component was coordinated by the Lead of the Breast Cancer Program at RADA and the Lead of the Cancer Program at PBOHI. They ensured accurate, culturally sensitive messaging across radio and television platforms, reaching general populations.

On Wednesday, October 15, at CRTV Northwest, both leads appeared on live radio segments. They talked about breast cancer, its signs and symptoms, prevalence in the Northwest region, common myths, prevention, stages, and the importance of self-breast examination.





On Friday, October 17, at CBC Radio, a 45-minute program featured discussions on breast cancer, signs and symptoms, prevalence, myths, prevention, stages, and how to perform self-breast examinations.



On Tuesday, October 21, at Abakwa FM, the program reached IDPs and market women, covering breast cancer, signs and symptoms, prevalence, myths, prevention, stages, and demonstrating self-breast examination.



On Saturday, October 18, at Star TV, coverage included survivor stories, the “I Checked” Challenge, and church outreach activities. Discussions focused on breast cancer, signs and symptoms, prevalence, myths, prevention, stages, and self-breast examination.



Overall Achievements

- 5,300+ people reached online
- Thousands reached through radio and TV
- Survivor stories encouraged early medical visits
- Strengthened partnerships with media

Challenges

- Insecurity restricting mobility
- Poor internet access in rural areas
- Financial constraints limiting follow-up screening

Recommendations

1. Establish periodic community screening activities.
2. Expand survivor-led education initiatives.
3. Strengthen collaboration with additional media and digital platforms.

Conclusion

The Pink October 2025 campaign successfully raised breast cancer awareness across Bamenda and neighboring communities. Despite challenges posed by conflict and displacement, RADA and PBOHI ensured women and families had access to life-saving information. Media engagement led by program leads significantly broadened reach and built trust. Sustained collaborative efforts remain essential to reduce late-stage diagnoses and improve breast cancer survival outcomes in the Northwest Region.

Appendix



PBOHI RADA

Day 28



Many women survive and live healthy lives after treatment.

"Plenty women don survive and dem dey live fine after treatment."

PBOHI RADA

Day 4

Breast Cancer is NOT Witchcraft

"Bibi cancer nabi Ngamba"



Being a woman is the biggest risk factor of breast cancer. It is rare for men to have.

PBOHI RADA

Pink October



I pledge to check

One advocate, one life saved

#Check, Detect, Protect



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