

## Biography of the Late Helen Njomo Molua Ikundi

### Preface

The tendency is for a person's biography to remain locked up in a cupboard or in a library to be covered with dust after they have passed on. However, the biography of the Late Mrs. Ikundi, born Helen Njomo Molua, hereafter simply referred to as "**Njoms**", will remain a living testament of her exceptional brilliance, proactivity and several personal strengths. This biography shall be a living document to be updated by her family and friends as they discover more about this extraordinary human being who lived so passionately amongst us and has transited to eternity to be with her Almighty Creator, who endowed her with so many special qualities and skills.

### Family Background

**Njoms** was born on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1960 in Tiko, to Princess Sarah Efeti Ewule of Lower Bokova and the Late Pa Elias Ikome Molua Mw'Effoe of Great Soppo, both of the Buea Sub-Division. She was the only surviving child of her mother. **Njoms** got married to Dr. Fritz Ikundi, an Accountant, from Wondongo village, Buea on January 4<sup>th</sup>, 1988 in Buea. The couple was blessed with four Children: Ms. Milly Limunga Ikundi, Ms. Rosaline Joffi Ikundi, Mr. Peter Rey Lyonga Ikundi and Mr. Oscar Mbome Ikundi. They were also recently blessed with a granddaughter, Shannon Efeti.

### Education

**Njoms** began her primary school education in Cameroon Baptist Convention (C.B.C.) School, Bolifamba, in 1964 and later in C.B.C. School, Great Soppo, where she obtained the First School Living Certificate in 1971. She then moved on to Saker Baptist College Limbe, where she obtained her General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level in 1976. She further went to the Bilingual Grammar School, Molyko Buea, where she studied and passed the General Certificate of Education Advanced Level in 1978. The young and talented **Njoms** did not end there. In 1979 she took on the challenge of university studies, going first to the University of Yaoundé where she earned a Bachelor's Degree with Honours in History in 1982, and thereafter proceeded to the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, in 1984, where she graduated with a Master's Degree in History in 1985.

True to her resilience and foresightedness, **Njoms** made her **educational development** a lifetime endeavour. In that context she contributed several articles elucidating on burning issues such as the Historical Methodology in the Southwest Historical Journal, 1988; Women in Development and the Fight Against HIV/AIDS in WCPDM Fako Section Conference in December 2000; the Bakweri Land Problem (also the subject of her Master's thesis) in Fako Cultural Magazine (Mbando) 2006; and Women in Development in FAWODA 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Magazine October 2008. **Njoms** also attended several conferences, seminars and meetings where she honed her professional experience and shared her knowledge on several issues prioritizing on women's education and development.

### Professional career

There was a seamless growth between **Njoms'** educational background and her professional development. Her first post shortly after graduating from the University of Yaoundé was as English Teacher at Government Secondary School Ngoumou (September–December 1982). She was later transferred to Yaoundé as History Teacher in Bilingual Grammar School, Yaoundé (1983-1984). From 1986 to 1993 she served as History Teacher and Head of Department at Bilingual Grammar School, Molyko. From 1993 to 2000, she was appointed History Teacher and Head of Department at Government Bilingual High School, Limbe. Her exemplary performance as an educator propelled her to the rank of pioneer Principal of Government Secondary School Batoke, a post which she held from the latter half of 2000 to 2002. She also served as Principal of Government Bilingual High School Limbe, from 2002 until her appointment to the highly coveted position of Divisional Delegate of Secondary Education for Fako in 2008. She served in this capacity until 2018 when she opted for early retirement.

Some of the significant work she undertook during her professional career entailed serving as the Representative of the Administration in the Divisional Supervisory Commission on Elections in Fako from 2002 to 2011. She also served as General Certificate of Education examiner for 11 years.

### **Social and Humanitarian Work**

**Njoms** extended her versatility and educational prowess way beyond the classroom to embrace other sectors of life. She served as President, Vice President, Secretary, Financial Secretary, Adviser in several social and religious groups. For example, she was President of the Fako Educational Administrators Meeting (F.E.A.M). She held various positions in Sakerettes Alumni groups first in the Buea Chapter and later in the Limbe Chapter. She was a founding member of the Ndinge Cultural Group aimed at promoting the Bakweri language and culture. She sponsored classes for the group in the Bakweri language at the Ernest Kofele School in Limbe.

In addition, **Njoms** played a frontline role in organizations such as FASIRUD, FAWODA, CWF, and CDC Women designed to support the development of women, targeting especially those in rural communities. She also served as a Board Member and Secretary of the Anne Mojoko Musonge Memorial Trust (AMMMT), aimed at supporting young underprivileged, but intelligent girls, to have access to quality education.

### **The Entrepreneur and Philanthropist**

**Njoms** was highly proactive and gifted with many entrepreneurial skills she is reputed to have inherited from her maternal grandmother, **Mbamba Titi**. She networked and reached out widely to several persons in her endeavour to get others, including herself, to learn or do something new to better their livelihood on a daily basis. It was also through her enterprising efforts that she exposed her qualities as a philanthropist. She used some of the proceeds from her businesses to support the needy, including in supplementing the school fees of those who worked for her. She opened a center to teach young girls and boys how to make Chin-Chin, Donuts and Banana Cakes.

She also harvested fruits from her mother's farm and taught people how to make quality fruit juices from guava, mangoes and oranges.

**Njoms** also developed a passion for sewing and remodeled secondhand clothing to make table cloths, bed sheets and even redesigned secondhand dresses with accessories to match. So successful was her sewing enterprise that she even ventured into making customized dresses for women with matching hats. Besides sewing, **Njoms** was among the first to get into the business of renting out tents, chairs, chair covers, tables and crockery to make life easy for hosting parties. She also believed in the creation of good lawns, flower gardens in her residences and was passionate about floral arrangements.

### **The Dedicated Christian**

For more sustainable results in her lifestyle, it was in the Church, God's Vineyard, that **Njoms** elected to entrench the seeds of her multiple talents. She undertook this goal with unrivalled enthusiasm. Baptized in the Baptist Church as a child, **Njoms** converted to the Presbyterian faith after her marriage to her spouse Dr. Fritz Ikundi, himself a staunch Presbyterian. As a Presbyterian convert, **Njoms** continued to serve the Lord with her soft and very angelic voice. She was the choir director of CWF for five years in the Presbyterian Church Bota Middle Farms, her church family. She was also the patron and founding member of the Elong'a David. She placed church activity at the fulcrum of her daily living. She was exceedingly prayerful with an unflinching faith in God. This saw her through many of life's storms, including in ill health. She died as an Elder, member of Session and current Chairperson of the Presbyterian Church Bota Middle Farms Congregation.

### **Awards**

**Njoms** received the following awards:

- Knight of the Cameroon Order of Merit
- Officer of the Cameroon Order of Merit
- Knight of the Cameroon Order of Valour

**Njoms** leaves behind her mother, husband, four adorable children and a grandchild as well as a host of relations and friends to mourn her. We pray for the peaceful repose of her gentle soul in the bosom of the Almighty God, her Maker.