

Democratic Republic of the Sudan
National Legislative Assembly
Council of States

The Role of Women in Economic
Growth and Sustainable
Development

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Council of States - Sudan

The Role of Women in Economic Growth and Sustainable Development

In view of the religious commands to live constructively and to pursue one's halal livelihood, women have participated in economic activity. The state has helped enhance women's economic role by developing a national policy to empower women in all fields of endeavor, including the economy. Economic empowerment refers to the capacity of men and women to participate in and contribute to the process of growth and development. It involves the appreciation of their contributions, and respecting their dignity, in addition to the advantages they derive from the equitable distribution of the benefits of growth. Women economic empowerment is an important pillar of economic growth and sustainable development.

- The UN Millennium Development Goals Report shows that women constitute the majority of the poor due to income disparity, scarcity of resources, lack of social protection, and limited access to assets, credit, technology, and markets.
- Economic empowerment is a key axis of the national policy of women empowerment. Major challenges are faced due to interdependency of the various political themes.

Economic empowerment can be achieved through a chain of multiple and integrated interventions, covering the legal, social, cultural, and environmental dimensions. Therefore, it was assigned a separate environment. An overall strategic objective, a set of sub-objectives, and implementation policies were developed, and will be translated into an action plan consisting of several programs and projects determined on the basis of key issues and priorities. The main priorities are gender inclusion in holistic and sectoral policies, legislations, and budgets, as well as supporting vital arenas and needy women groups. The Formulation of these goals is based on an analysis of the current situation. Both achievements and gaps in various aspects of economic empowerment were identified.

- Overall Strategic Objective

Empowering women economically to enhance their participation in the economic activity and their contributions to domestic income, as well as to help eliminate all forms of economic discrimination against women and reduce disparity in power relations

Specific objectives:

Quantitative and qualitative transformation through intellectual development to eliminate all kinds of economic discrimination and to capitalize on creative skills to achieve equitable economic empowerment of women.

- Building an administrative, legal, regulatory, and service environment that enhances women - especially vulnerable groups - economic empowerment in the public, private and unorganized sectors.
- Enhancing women's participation in public and private sector planning and implementation.
- Emphasizing women's exercise of their rights of access to investment assets and resources, including their sharia-ordained inheritance shares.
- To boost women's efficiency and involvement in entrepreneurship within the framework of self- and institutional employment, as well as in cooperative societies and community sector, especially vulnerable groups.
- To highlight the role of the media in promoting women's economic issues.

Policies

- Raising social awareness of the equitable empowerment of women.
- Providing technical, financial and service consultations to promote women's access to and optimal utilization of economic resources.

- Rehabilitation and building the capacities of women, especially vulnerable groups, through technical and vocational training.
- Reforming holistic, financial and monetary policies to introduce incentives of women's economic empowerment.
- Enacting and enforcement of laws and regulations that guarantee equitable women's access to the labor market and reforming existing restrictive legislations.
- Codification of women's work in the unorganized sector within a formal framework and facilitating women's involvement in this sector, taking into account their circumstances and positive role.
- Reforming and enacting labor laws on the public and private sector employment practices to facilitate women economic empowerment, including enjoyment of all insurance benefits (paid maternity leave and childcare at the workplace).
- Reforming production and service sector policies such as commercial policies, including border trade, as well as the agriculture and investment sectors.
- Supporting women's gradual advancement in senior leadership roles to enhance their participation in planning, policy development and decision-making.
- Raising women's awareness of their legal rights in relation to economic activity.
- Providing legal protection of women to enable them to enjoy their rights, including their sharia-ordained shares in relation to economic activities.
- Offering specialized entrepreneurship training opportunities.
- Providing codified economic opportunities for women in rural and urban areas in the public, private and unorganized sectors.
- Distributing land property (suitable for agricultural, livestock, pastoral and fish production) and issuing land ownership deeds.
- Setting up women's cooperatives and production, processing and marketing associations.
- To boost financing of women's enterprises of all types, including micro, small and medium enterprises, and facilitate security required for supporting cooperative societies.
- Provision and improvement of social services (education, health, environment, roads, bridges, connectors) to enhance women's productivity.
- Expanding the base of production and service sectors.

- Building the capacities of productive and businesswomen in marketing, technology and business transactions at the national and international levels.
- Supplying marketing windows of women's products, including domestic and international exhibitions.
- Media promotion of gender equity and gender integration into the economic field.
- Encouragement of women to highlight their economic achievements in the media along with the media promotion of the national policy of women empowerment.

Economic pillar:

- Viewing women's economic and labor issues from a holistic perspective in connection to gender-inclusive economic activity.
- Inclusion of gender issues in privatization policies and remedying negative effects on women, such as the limited opportunities and options of access to the labor market and their impact on subsistence and household economic conditions.
- Paying attention to the impact of taxes on the financing of individual enterprises and the ways it affects productivity.
- Inclusion of gender in labor policies to reduce challenges to accessing the labor market, to enable women in general and female graduates in particular to get access to the labor market and empower them economically;
- Establishing a legal framework that guarantees profit to women employees and workers, creating jobs which meet their skills, and guaranteeing gender equity in training and rehabilitation.
- Taking into account the rate of women employed in the various sectors (33% of total employment according to the 2008 census data). Unemployment rate among female graduates in the various disciplines is higher than that of males. Women's access to economic opportunities shall be one of the top five political priorities of gender equity.
- Traditional linear budget affects the process of economic empowerment. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure that gender parity in the proper scientific sense is met in the budget as it impacts application of gender policies in all relevant sectors. Financial federalism shall also be adopted as it directly influences the implementation of policies.

- Strengthening the economy of household care as an effective economic component in the empowerment process and also is closely linked to gender balance.
- Promoting the concept of gender mainstreaming into development by integrating women as men and achieving the objectives of highlighting their roles in development as contributors and beneficiaries. The focus is not only on developing a separate plan for women in economic activities, but also at the policy level.
- Application of transparency and accountability criteria and compliance with the provisions of Labor Law in terms of equal pay for equal work and promotion of higher positions and the right of training for all groups.
- Working to legalize the secondary sector and adherence to appropriate work conditions in accordance with the labor legislation in the public sector and encouragement the conversion of some of the practiced activities to activities that support the economy through entrepreneurship and providing financing that commensurate with the volume of activity practiced.
- Taking into account the fact that women should enjoy full- paid maternity leave of eight consecutive weeks. An exception must also be given in the case of hard childbirth and the birth of more than one child. Mother should be granted also a paid leave if there is need for her child to stay at the hospital at the time of breast-feeding.
- Obligating the employer to establish a suitable place in the institution under the supervision of a qualified nanny to care for the children (under the age of four years) of women workers in order to implement the positive discrimination labor laws for women, especially in the private sector.
- Encouraging the development of policies to ensure the sustainability of available resources , and including considerations of the use and utilization of these resources by women and men as there is disparity between the use of available resources by men and women, as well as differences in the definition of patterns of production and consumption.

- Empowerment of rural women to improve their situations by acquiring available natural resources such as land, and other related services such as finance, technologies that improve production ; Development of simple techniques which are necessary for reducing effort and time, and can improve the situation of rural woman.

- Providing new and encouraging financing mechanisms that could allow rural women to acquire facilities for the purchase of more efficient and less cost manufacturing equipments to enable them doing small, income-generating activities.

- Promoting the harmonization of work and family responsibilities for women and men in order to support efforts aimed at making balance between family responsibilities and the professional responsibilities of working women ; Supporting services should be provided for working women, particularly the promotion of the establishment and development of nurseries and kindergartens, and the improvement of supervision in order to support women's participation in the labor market, and to benefit from the legislative provisions of the International Labor Law, the Arab Labor Convention and the national labor laws ;The period of maternity leave shall be not less than twelve weeks.

- Strengthening the basic frameworks that promote productivity, such as health ,in general , and reproductive health in particular, and rates of knowledge, and then education and knowledge of technology as required by practiced activities, availability of paved roads and transport network.

Annex 2

Projects for women's groups to be included in the operational plan

- Project for working women (a pillar): this project is aimed at advocating the laws of work and activating them by optimizing application , modifying the laws that need amendments and enacting some laws where gaps are proven in national and even state laws, especially regulations of local authorities related to income-generating activities in unorganized sector and how to organize and market them.

Target group: Working women in public, private and unorganized sectors.

Partners: Ministry of Labor, Ministry of Justice, Employers' Union, General Federation of Sudanese Employees Unions, Center of Women for Human Rights, local authorities, human rights organizations, donors ... etc.

Methodology of work: Carrying out multi-faceted advocacy campaign .

Entrepreneur and businesswoman project (Entrepreneur) :

The project is designed for women entrepreneur and businesswomen to explore the creativity and innovation of women business leaders and in all areas of investment and business (export, import and border trade).

Target group: Young women, women who have no experience, creative women, and businesswomen who have multiple experiences; They will get intensive training courses .

Partners: University of Sudan - Center for Entrepreneurship and Self Employment, Family Bank, Entrepreneurship Training Center, Business Women's Secretariat, Women in different Chambers of the Employers Union, Exporters and Suppliers Union, National Federation of Sudanese Youth, any other community-based organizations including leaders, entrepreneuretc.

Work Methodology : Training in entrepreneurship, supporting some innovations and leading business policies through guidelines and facilities in the fields of investment, trade and marketing.

Rural Women's Project: it is similar to the national project for the development of rural women, with focusing on economic empowerment including training and financing. Rural women who is working in the traditional rain agricultural sector and cash sector will be provided financing in the form of good loan or microfinance in agricultural sector, both vegetable and animal, as well as agricultural products manufacturing, either vegetable or animal farming; This project is also aimed at encouraging the pastoral women.

Target group: Poor rural women under any legalized organization, whether the law of agricultural & animal production profession or law of cooperation and other laws of investment.

Partners: Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of livestock wealth, counterpart ministries in the states of Sudan, any civil society organizations capable of creating initiatives in agricultural, livestock and pastoral production in the countryside (Sudanese Women's General Union, Development Operations institution, etc.)

Methodology of work : Provision of non-monetary services including knowledge and skill training and financial services (Finance, savings, insurance, etc.), then the ownership of assets for manufacturing agricultural and animal products, land ownership and protection of pastoral roads for the safety of pastoral women and their products.

The traditional business development project : It aimed at revival and protection of heritage and handicrafts products in order to improve their quality and increase competitiveness .

Target group: Creative women who is working in the traditional Sudanese handicrafts made from (palm, pumpkin, pear l, beads, leather, etc.).

Partners: Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Industry, community development colleges, national organizations ... etc .

Methodology of work: Conducting survey, identifying and classifying these professions and their geographical locations ; providing training for workers and employees ; Marketing .

Annex No. 3

Current situation: Since the economic empowerment is one of the axes of national policy axes needed to empower women and set up a strategy for women in the economic aspect, we have taken advantage of the analysis of the situation of women, which was conducted to know the situation of women in all aspects, including the economic aspect ; the

SWOT analysis used includes the internal and external environment so that the strategy meets the needs of women.

Strength points :

- Legislations and laws that serve the issues of women in economic aspects
- Active Participation of women in all economic areas.
- Women's Cohesion and their involvement in community entities that serve their economic issues.
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Weaknesses:

- Conceptual weakness for gender issues in general and in economic aspects in particular.
- Weakness of women capabilities in Planning, implementation and resource management.
- Poor knowledge of their general and economic rights, especially how to protect these rights. –
- Illiteracy among women.

External environment

A- Opportunities:

- State interest in women and recognition of their active role in all aspects including economy.
- Signing of regional and international agreements that support women, such as the African Agenda 2063 and sustainable development goals 2030.

B. Threats:

- Poverty and economic pressures and their impact on women .
- Conflicts , wars and the high rate of women family supporters.