

**THE IMPACT OF THE SUDANESE GENERAL WOMEN'S UNION
SAVINGS AND MICRO-FINANCE/CREDIT PROJECTS ON POVERTY
ALLEVIATION AT THE HOUSEHOLD LEVEL
WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON
WOMEN'S VULNERABILITY AND EMPOWERMENT**

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The Impact of the Sudanese General Women's Union Savings and Micro-Finance/ Credit Projects on Poverty Alleviation at the Household level with Special Emphasis on Women's Vulnerability and Empowerment

Summary

The objective of this study is to assess the nature of women's empowerment promoted by the Sudanese Women General Union (SWGU) in Sudan as a strategy for simultaneously addressing both poverty alleviation and women's empowerment using microcredit as a tool in the fight against poverty and women's empowerment at the household level during the period 1999-2005.

The SWGU directed its development efforts towards promoting the women's cause officially and unofficially through the whole spectrum of governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations. Therefore, the government support these initiatives of women development processes and assisted in establishing the SWGU in 1990 as a strategic planning and coordination mechanism for poverty alleviation through the lead of the Ministry of Welfare and Social Development and with the cooperation from other ministries, government and non-government organisations at national, state and grassroots levels.

The problem of the research reveals that majority of women in Sudan live with low or no income; economically they are dependent on their husbands' income; burdened with their household activities and responsibilities to feed; educate and take care of many children, encounter a core problem which is lack of access to credit and financial services to economically, socially and politically empower themselves and improve their status.

The study reviewed the relevant literature, the context of women's poverty in Sudan, Sudan poverty strategies and policies, SWGU's role in strategic planning, coordination and implementation of the microcredit programmes. The achievements of the study on the socio-economic empowerment of women at the household levels, the constraints and the recommendations were summarised.

The researcher carried out this study during the period 2005-2009, to add to the body of the empirical literature of women studies in particular to the SWGU's microcredit projects best

practices and lessons learned. In addition the study could help in conducting further women studies in Sudan and other developing counties.

CONTENTS	Page
Lists of tables, diagrams, figures, Charts	x
Acknowledgment	xxii
Acronyms	xxiv
Glossary	xxvii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background information	1
1.2 Problem statement of the study	12
1.3 Objective of the study	13
1.4 Secondary objectives of the study	13
1.5 Research questions	14
1.6 Overview of methodology	16
1.7 Structure of the study	17
1.8 Conclusion	21
2 Theoretical and conceptual framework	22
2.1 Introduction	22
2.2 Models of the entrepreneur	23
2.3 Household micro-economics models	25
2.3.1 Intra-household concept and structure	26
2.3.2 Intro-household bargaining and decision making	27
2.3.2.1 Production and consumption theory and decision making model	28
2.3.2.2 Cooperative conflict and bargaining model	29
2.3.3 Intra-household and external social relationship	35
2.4 Vulnerability, coping and diversification models.	37
2.5 Empowerment models	44
2.6 Conclusion	49
3 Research methodology	51
3.1 Introduction	51
3.2 Research techniques	51
3.2.1 Secondary data	51
3.2.2 Primary data	52

3.3	Sample	53
3.3.1	Size of the group samples	53
3.3.2	Sample locations	55
3.3.3	Criteria for the selection of the sample	57
3.3.4	Techniques of the primary data collection	59
3.3.4.1	Qualitative method: In-depth interview	59
3.3.4.2	Quantitative method: Questionnaire	62
3.4	Administration of the study	63
3.5	Constraints	65
3.6	Conclusion	68
4	Overview of poverty situation among women in Sudan	69
4.1	Introduction	69
4.2	Factors affecting women's vulnerability	70
4.2.1	Political factors	70
4.2.1.1	Historical background	70
4.2.1.2	Political rules and regulations	71
4.2.1.3	Cultural factors and gender perception	71
4.2.1.4	Gender participation in voting	74
4.2.1.5	Female political representation	84
4.2.1.5.1.1	In Legislative Apparatus	85
4.2.1.5.1.2	In Executive Apparatus	90
4.2.2	Economic factors	93
4.2.2.1	Introduction to labour force laws	93
4.2.2.2	Female participation in labour force	96
4.2.2.2.1	In public sectors	97
4.2.2.2.2	In private sectors	100
4.2.2.3	Working conditions	102
4.2.2.4	Federal remedy system	104
4.2.2.5	Work promotion	104
4.2.2.6	Technical training	109
4.2.2.7	Labour laws deficiencies	113

4.3	Impact of strategies adopted to alleviate poverty	115
4.3.1	Introduction to structural adjustment strategies	115
4.3.2	Economic impact	117
4.3.2.1	Wages	117
4.3.2.2	Inflation	118
4.3.2.3	Employment	120
4.3.2.4	Migration	126
4.3.2.5	Female headed households	128
4.3.2.6	Entrepreneurship	131
4.3.3	Social impact	132
4.3.3.1	Homeless children	132
4.3.3.2	Morbidity and mortality	132
4.3.3.3	School dropout and absenteeism	139
4.3.3.4	Access to safe drinking water and sanitation	147
4.4	Conclusion	152
5	Structural Adjustment and poverty alleviation policies	154
5.1	Introduction	154
5.2	Poverty reduction infrastructural services projects	156
5.2.1	Constraints encountered	161
5.3	Social Mobilization for Solidarity and Production programme	162
5.3.1	Introduction to family productive policy	162
5.3.2	Objectives of the family productive policy	163
5.3.3	Financial mechanism for family productive policy	164
5.3.3.1	Zakat Social Solidarity Fund	164
5.3.3.2	Credit and Social Development Bank	170
5.3.3.3	SudaTel Corporation	173
5.3.3.4	Other supportive financial institutions	174
5.3.3.4.1	Agriculture Bank	174
5.3.3.4.2	Al Kifaya Bank	176
5.3.3.4.3	Al Zahra Bank	177
5.3.4	Administrative mechanism for family productive policy	177

5.3.4.1	Social Development Authority	178
5.3.4.2	General objectives of the Social Development Authority	178
5.3.4.3	Capacity building and human development strategy	179
5.3.4.4	Marketing strategy for savings and microcredit projects	179
5.3.4.5	Coordination and relations with related organizations	180
5.3.4.6	Budget for family productive activities	181
5.3.5	Impacts of the Social Mobilization for Solidarity and Production programme	185
5.4	Conclusion	189
6	Sudanese Women's General Union	190
6.1	Introduction	190
6.2	Sudanese women charter	195
6.2.1	Article (1) principle of political participation	197
6.2.2	Article (2) principle of the family	197
6.2.3	Article (3) principle of sustainable development and human rights	198
6.2.4	Article (4) principle of education and health	199
6.2.5	Article (5) principle of peace and security	200
6.3	Objectives	201
6.4	Structure	204
6.4.1	General / National Congress	204
6.4.2	Advisory/ Consultative Council	204
6.4.3	General Secretariat	205
6.4.4	General Assistance for Resource Development	205
6.4.5	Economic Development Secretariat	205
6.4.6	Social Secretariat	206
6.4.7	Education Secretariat	206
6.4.8	Health Secretariat	206
6.4.9	Culture Secretariat	206
6.4.10	Research, Information and Statistic Secretariat	207
6.4.11	Political Secretariat	207
6.5	Role of the Sudanese General Women Union in the national poverty	

reduction strategy	208
6.6 Financial institutions policy	226
6.6.1 Formal institutions	226
6.6.1.1 Modes of finance	227
6.6.1.2 Banking and government financing policies regulations	228
6.6.2 Informal/ Social institutions policy	231
6.6.3 National non-governmental organisations	232
6.7 Conclusion	235
7. Sudanese Women General Union savings and microcredit projects	237
7.1 Introduction	237
7.2 Kinds of savings and microcredit projects	237
7.3 Objectives	243
7.4 Women beneficiary	252
7.4.1 The initiation of the micro-credit and savings projects ideas	252
7.4.2 Female entrepreneurs' previous involvement in economic activities	254
7.4.3 The communication channels	257
7.4.4 Methods of reaching the banks	259
7.5 Financial institutions for funding the Sudanese Women General Union	260
7.5.1 Functioning of the financial institutions at national and state levels	260
7.5.1.1 The Sudanese Women General Union Six Year Plan 1999-2005	260
7.5.1.2 Financial institutions supporting female savings and microcredit Projects	264
7.5.1.3 Roles of the financial institutions and the Sudanese Women General Union	264
7.5.1.4 The contribution of the financial institutions	266
7.5.1.5 Planned contribution of the financial institution to the southern states	286
7.5.1.6 Contribution of the financial institution to the production centres	287
7.5.2 Functioning of the financial institutions at grassroots levels	303
7.5.2.1 Formal institutions	303
7.5.2.2 Banks support in funding the female microcredit projects	304

7.5.2.3	Kinds of loans	305
7.5.2.4	Financial modes of loan	307
7.5.2.5	Loan procedures	309
7.5.2.6	Bank processes	310
7.5.2.7	Formal financial institutions regulations	311
7.5.2.8	Sufficiency of the loan size	313
7.5.2.9	Period of the instalments	315
7.5.2.10	Periods of paying the instalments	316
7.5.2.11	Payment of instalments	317
7.5.2.12	Problems and risks facing female entrepreneurs	319
7.5.2.13	Coping strategies	320
7.6	Administrative role of the Sudanese Women General Union savings and microcredit projects	324
7.6.1	Structure establishment	324
7.6.2	Capacity building	326
7.7	Constraints	331
7.8	Conclusion	339
8.	Impact of the Sudanese Women General Union savings and Micro-credit projects	340
8.1	Introduction	340
8.2	Impact at personal level	340
8.2.1	Life cycle effect	340
8.2.2	Educational level	343
8.2.3	Marital status	346
8.2.4	Parity	348
8.2.5	Family members	349
8.2.6	Household assets	351
8.2.7	Household water and electricity	357
8.3	Economic impacts: at the production/ project level	360
8.3.1	Uses of the loan	360
8.3.2	Increase in income	361
8.3.3	Increase of productionof the existing projects	362

8.3.4	Profit gained from the projects	363
8.3.5	Contribution to the household income	366
8.3.5.1	Household expenditures	367
8.3.5.2	Food expenditure	369
8.4	Social impact: female entrepreneurs and decision making	373
8.4.1	Contribution of the female entrepreneurs to education	373
8.4.2	Contribution of the female entrepreneurs to health	375
8.4.3	Contribution of the female entrepreneurs to housing improvement	376
8.4.4	Saving and future security	377
8.5	Constraints	380
8.6	Conclusion	383
9.	Summary of achievements, constraints and recommendations	386
9.1	Introduction	386
9.2	Achievements	386
9.3	Risks and constraints	397
9.4	Recommendations	401
9.5	Conclusion	408
Annexes:		
	References	411
	Annex -1: Tables, Figures and Charts	427
	Annex -2: Questionnaire	453

List of Tables, Diagrams, Charts and Figures

List of Tables	Page
1. Table 3.1 sample of the Study	55
2. Table 4.1: Participation of Women in the 1968 Election	75
3. Table 4.2: Participation of Women in Vote Process for 2000 Election per State.	77
4. Table 4.3: Participation of Women in the 2000 Election – Northern Kordufan State.	79
5. Table 4.4: Women's Participation in Vote 2000 Election Khartoum State.	81
6. Table 4.5: Sudanese Women's Participation in the Legislative Apparatus- 1965-2004.	86
7. Table 4.6: Professional Distribution of the Elected Members of the National Congress 2000.	89
8. Table 4.7: Women's Participation in the Executive Apparatus, 1973-1999.	91
9. Table 4.8: Participation of Women in Public Services 1994– 2003.	97
10. Table 4.9: Public Service: Participation of Women in Professional Work 2001.	99
11. Table 4.10: Participation of Women in Private Sectors, 2001.	100
12. Table 4.11: Participation of Women in Federal Ministries, 2001.	106
13. Table 4.13: Training Inside the Country by Gender -1998.	110
14. Table 4.14: Training Abroad by Gender, 1998.	112
15. Table 4.15: Percentage of Female participation in Labour Force 1999.	121
16. Table 4.16: Type of Female Labour Force Occupations, 1999.	123
17. Table 4.17: Percentage Distribution of Type of Occupation by State of Residence, 1999.	124
18. Table 4.19: Distribution of Poor Female Headed Households, Northern Sudan.	129
19. Table 5.1 Implementation Status of the Poverty Reduction Infrastructural Services Projects 2000-2003.	159
20. Table 5.2: Growth of Various Sources of Zakat (Million Sudanese Dinar).	165
21. Table 5.3: Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development: Financial Support for Orphans & Poor Productive Families, 1995-1999.	167
22. Table 5.4 Number of Orphans & Poor Productive Families Reached by Zakat Social	

Solidarity Fund 1995-1999.	168
23. Table 5.5: Distribution of Poor Productive Families by Northern States.	172
24. Table 5.6: Agriculture Bank Budget Allocated for the Years 1997-1999	175
25. Table 5.7: Financial Performance of Implementation of Family Productive Activities, 1998-2000.	181
26. Table 5.8 Budget for the Social Mobilization for Solidarity & Production Programme, 1998-2000 (Million Sudanese Dinar)	182
27. Table 5.9: Social Mobilization for Solidarity and Production Program Capacity Building Programme, 1998-2000.	187
28. Table 6.1 : SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects by Sector 2000 – 2005.	212
29. Table 6.2: Plan for the Distribution of the SudaTel Credit– First Batch 1999	216
30. Table 6.3: NGO’s Distribution Plan by State for Implementing SudaTel Credit.	220
31. Table 6.4: SudaTel Fund Savings and Microcredit Projects Credit Implemented by the Social Development Bank Up to 31/12/2001.	224
32. Table 6.5: SudaTel Fund Savings and Microcredit Projects Credit Implemented by the Social Development Bank (1999-2002) up to 31/12/2001.	225
33. Table 6.6: Credit to Non-governmental Sector by Mode of Financing (Billion Sudanese Dinar).	229
34. Table 7.1: Kinds of SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects 2000 – 2005.	239
35. Table 7.2: Economic Activities Executed by the Microcredit Entrepreneurs.	242
36. Table 7.3: Reasons for Joining Microcredit and Savings Projects.	245
37. Table 7.4: Scale of Preferences for Female Entrepreneurs to Join the Microcredit and Savings Projects.	247
38. Table 7.5: The Initiation of the Savings and Microcredit Projects Ideas	253
39. Table 7.6: Female Entrepreneurs Previous Involvement in Economic Activities.	254
40. Table 7.7: The Communication Channels Assisting in the identification of the Microcredit Projects.	257
41. Table 7.8: Methods of Reaching the Banks.	259
42. Table 7.9: Savings and Microcredit Projects Planned Fund from Credit & Social Development Bank, 1999	268
43. Table 7. 10: Plan Submitted to the Credit & Social Development Bank for Funding	

Female Savings & Microcredit Projects 2000 -2004.	270
44. Table 7.11: Distribution of the Credit & Social Development Bank Poor Productive Families by State, 1999 – 2003.	272
45. Table 7.12: Contribution of the SWGU in Reaching the Female Entrepreneurs Targeted by SudaTel in 1999.	274
46. Table 7.13: Performance of Female Savings and Microcredit Projects Implemented at 2000 -2001.	276
47. Table 7.14: Performance of SWGU Female Savings and Microcredit Projects up to 2003.	277
48. Table 7.15: Performance of the Female Savings and Microcredit and Projects for the Nine States, 2004.	279
49. Table 7.16: Female Microcredit Groups Distributed by the State, 2000 -2003.	280
50. Table 7.17: Performance of Female Savings and Microcredit and Projects, 2001-2003	281
51. Table 7.18: Female Microcredit Performance for North Kordufan and Khartoum States, 2001-2003.	283
52. Table 7.19: Female Microcredit Performance for North Kordufan and Khartoum States, 2001-2003 .	283
53. Table 7.20: Performance of the SWGU Savings & Microcredit Projects for the Year 2004.	285
54. Table 7. 21: Expansion of the Savings & Microcredit Projects at Southern States, 2005.	287
55. Table 7.22: Poverty Reduction Revolving Loan Fund for Khalawi Women 2001-2003.	289
56. Table 7.23: Female Entrepreneurs Reached by Zakat Social Development Fund.	291
57. Table 7.24: Fund Allocated for Female Microcredit Projects, Up to 2005	292
58. Table 7.25 Female Entrepreneurs Reached by SudaTel Microcredit Projects, 1999-2005.	294
59. Table 7.26: Contribution of the SWGU in the Implementation of the SudaTel Savings & Microcredit Projects, 1999-2005.	295

60. Table 7.27: Contribution of the SWGU to Reach the Target Group of the Productive Families of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.	296
61. Table 7.28: Poverty Revolving Loan Fund for Women's Production Centre, Northern Kordufan State, 2000-2003.	298
62. Table 7.29: Revolving Loan Fund for Individual Economic Enterprises Kordufan State, 2003	300
63. Table 7.30: Budget Allocation for Milk Production Centre, Northern Kordufan, Kazagil	301
64. Table 7.31: Banks' Support in Funding Female Entrepreneurs' Savings and Microcredit Projects.	304
65. Table 7.32: Kinds of Loans Adopted by Female Entrepreneurs.	305
66. Table 7.33: Financial Modes of the Loans Adopted by the Female Entrepreneurs	307
67. Table 7.34: Female Entrepreneurs' Opinion of the Loan Procedures	309
68. Table 7.35: Bank Processes.	310
69. Table 7.36: Bank Regulations and the Appropriateness of the Microcredit Grace Period.	311
70. Table 7.37: Sufficiency of the Loan Size.	313
71. Table 7.38: Appropriateness of the Period of Instalments.	315
72. Table 7.39: Periods of Payment Instalments.	316
73. Table 7.40: Payment of the Instalments.	317
74. Table 7.41: Problems and Risks Facing Female Entrepreneurs in the Payment of the Instalments.	319
75. Table 7.42: Coping Strategies Adopted by the Female Entrepreneurs	320
76. Table 7.43: Performance of the SWGU Revolving Loan Fund and the Credit Projects up to 2005.	322
77. Table 7.44: Training Courses for the Economic Development Secretariats Staff of the SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects up to 2005	327
78. Table 7.45: Female Microcredit Entrepreneurs' Capacity Building Project 2001-2003.	331
79. Table 8.1: Distribution of Female Entrepreneurs by Age.	341

80. Table 8.2: Educational Level of the Female Entrepreneurs.	345
81. Table 8.3: Marital Status of the Female Entrepreneurs.	346
82. Table 8.4: Number of Children.	349
83. Table 8.5: Female Entrepreneurs' Family Members	350
84. Table 8.6: Ownership of Assets for Entrepreneurs' Households	353
85. Table 8.7: Percentage Distribution of Households According to Type of Accommodation and Type of Holding.	356
86. Table 8.8: Percentage Distribution of Households According to Source of Water	358
87. Table 8.9: Distribution Percentage of Households According to Source of Electricity.	359
88. Table 8.10: Uses of the Loan.	360
89. Table 8.11: Use of the Loan for its Intended Purpose.	361
90. Table 8.12: Increase in Production.	362
91. Table 8.13: Gaining of Profit.	363
92. Table 8.14: Improvement of the Family Income.	366
93. Table 8.15: Household Expenditures.	368
94. Table 8.16: Food Item Consumption and Average Expenditure per Day.	370
95. Table 8.17: Contribution of Female Entrepreneurs to the Household Food Expenditure between Beneficiaries – Non- Beneficiaries.	371
96. Table 8.18: Female Entrepreneur's Spending on School Fees and Materials in the Last 12 Month.	374
97. Table 8.19: Desire for Spending on the Housing Improvements.	376
98. Table 8.20: Female Entrepreneurs Managed to Save.	377

List of Diagrams	Page
1. Diagram 4.1: Participation of Women in 1968 Election	76
2. Diagram 4.2: Participation of Women in the 2000 Election: Northern Kordufan State.	80
3. Diagram 4.3: Women's Participation in Vote 2000 Election -Khartoum State.	82
4. Diagram 4.4: Sudanese Women's Participation in the Legislative Apparatus-	

1965-2004.	87
5. Diagram 4.5: Professional Distribution of the Elected Members of the National Congress 2000.	90
6. Diagram 4.6: Women's Participation in the Executive Apparatus, 1973-1999.	92
7. Diagram 4.7: Participation of Women in Public Services – 2003.	98
8. Diagram 4.8: Public Service: Participation of Women in Professional Work 2001.	99
9. Diagram 4.9: Participation of Women in Private Sectors, 2001.	101
10. Diagram 4.10: Participation of Women in Federal Ministries 2001.	107
11. Diagram 4.11: Participation of Women in Professional Institutions, 2001	108
12. Diagram 4.12: Training Inside the Country by Gender -1998.	110
13. Diagram 4.13: Training Abroad by Gender, 1998.	112
14. Diagram 4.14: Percentage of Female Participation in the Labour Force, 1999.	121
15. Diagram 4.15: Type of Female Labour Force Occupations, 1999.	123
16. Diagram 4.16: Percentage Distribution of Type of Occupation by State of Residence, 1999.	124
17. Diagram 4.17: Distribution of Poor Female Headed Households, Northern Sudan.	130
18. Diagram 4.18: Infant and Child Mortality (per 1,000 live births), 2000.	133
19. Diagram 4.19: Birth Attendants for Women Giving Birth for the Year 1999 in Northern Sudan.	136
20. Diagram 4.20: Medical and Health Staff Grouping 1989-2000 in Northern Sudan.	138
21. Diagram 4.21: Women aged 15-49 who have knowledge about HIV/AIDS.	139
22. Diagram 4.22: Percentage of Repetition and Dropout 1998/1999 at Khartoum and North Kordufan States.	141
23. Diagram 4.23: Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios in Basic Education, 1998/1999.	142
24. Diagram 4.24: Students Enrolled in Government Universities According to International Classification for Education, 1990/1991-2000/01.	144
25. Diagram 4.25: Percent of population above 15 years that literate in Khartoum and Kordufan.	146
26. Diagram 4.26: Drinking Water Sources in Northern Sudan (percent of population).	149

27. Diagram 4.27: Excreta Disposal in Khartoum and Northern Kordufan1999 (percent of population) .	150
28. Diagram 5.1:Implementation Status of the Poverty Reduction InfrastructuralServices Projects 2000-2003.	160
29. Diagram 5.2: Growth of Various Sources of Zakat (Million Sudanese Dinar).	166
30. Diagram 5.3: Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development: Financial Support for Orphans & Poor Productive Families, 1995-1999.	167
31. Diagram 5.4: Number of Orphans & Poor Productive Families Reached by Zakat Social Solidarity Fund 1995-1999.	169
32. Diagram 5.5: Distribution of Poor Families by Northern States.	172
33. Diagram 5.6: Incidence of Poverty by State According to MMS Survey 1999	173
34. Diagram 5.7: Agriculture Bank Budget Allocated for the Years 1997-1999.	176
35. Diagram 5.8: Financial Performance of Implementation of Family Productive Activities, 1998-2000.	182
36. Diagram 5.9: Budget for the Social Mobilization for Solidarity and Production Programme, 1998-2000 (Million Sudanese Dinar).	183
37. Diagram 5.10: Percentage of Implementation Completed for Women's Small Scale Projects.	185
38. Diagram 5.11 :Social Mobilization for Solidarity and Production Programme: Capacity Building Programme, 1998 2000.	187
39. Diagram 6.1:SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects by Sector 2000-2005	213
40. Diagram 6.2: Plan for the Distribution of the SudaTel Credit–First Batch 1999	217
41. Diagram 6.3: Distribution of Female Entrepreneurs Who Benefited From SudaTel Credit, 1999.	221
42. Diagram 6.4: SudaTel Fund for Family Productive Projects up to 2001.	225
43. Diagram 6.5: Unutilised SudaTel Micro-credit Fund- Credit and Social Development Bank.	226
44. Diagram 6.6: Credit to Non-governmental Sector by Mode of Financing (Billion Sudanese Dinar)	229
45. Diagram 7.1: Economic Activities Executed by the Microcredit Entrepreneurs.	243
46. Diagram 7.2: Reasons for Joining Microcredit and Savings Projects.	246

47. Diagram 7.3: The Initiation of the Savings and Microcredit Projects Ideas.	254
48. Diagram 7.4: Female Entrepreneurs Previous Involvement in Economic Activities	255
49. Diagram 7.5: The Communication Channels Assisting in the Identification of the Microcredit Projects.	258
50. Diagram 7.6: Methods of Reaching the Banks.	259
51. Diagram 7.7: Savings & Microcredit Projects Planned Fund from Credit & Social Development Bank, 1999	269
52. Diagram 7.8: Plan Submitted to the Credit & Social Development Bank for Funding Female Savings and Microcredit Projects 2000 -2004.	271
53. Diagram 7.9 Contribution of the SWGU in Reaching Productive Families, 1999 – 2003.	273
54. Diagram 7.10: Contribution of the SWGU in Reaching the Female Entrepreneurs Targeted by SudaTel 1999.	274
55. Diagram 7.11: Contribution of the SWGU in the Implementation of SudaTel Budget -1999.	275
56. Diagram 7.12: Performance of SWGU Female Savings & Microcredit Projects, 2003.	278
57. Diagram 7.13: Performance of the Female Savings and Microcredit Projects for the Nine States, 2003.	279
58. Diagram 7.14: Female Microcredit Groups Distributed by the State, 2000- 2003	281
59. Diagram 7.15: Performance of Female Savings & Microcredit Projects for the Nine States, 2001-2003.	282
60. Diagram 7.16: Female Microcredit Performance for North Kordufan and Khartoum States, 2001-2003	284
61. Diagram 7.17 Expansion of the Female Savings & Microcredit Projects in the Southern States, 2004-2005.	287
62. Diagram 7.18: Poverty Reduction Revolving Loan Fund for Khalawi Women, 2001-2003.	290
63. Diagram 7.19: Female Entrepreneurs Reached by Zakat Social Development	

Fund 2001-2003.	292
64. Diagram 7.20: Fund Allocated for Female Microcredit Projects, Up to 2005	293
65. Diagram 7.21: Female Entrepreneurs Reached by SudaTel Microcredit Projects, 1999-2005.	294
66. Diagram 7.22: Contribution of the SWGU in the Implementation of the SudaTel Savings and Microcredit Projects, 1999-2005.	295
67. Diagram 7.23: Performance of the of the SudaTel Savings and Microcredit Projects, 1999-2005.	296
68. Diagram 7.24: Contribution of the SWGU to Reach the Target Group of the Productive Families of the Poverty Reduction Strategy.	297
69. Diagram 7.25: Revolving Loan Fund for Women's Production Centre, Northern Kordufan State, 2000-2003.	299
70. Diagram 7.26: Budget Allocation for Milk Production Centre, Northern Kordufan, Kazagil.	302
71. Diagram 7.27: Banks' Support in Funding Female Entrepreneurs' Savings and Microcredit Projects.	304
72. Diagram 7.28: Kinds of Loans Adopted by Female Entrepreneurs.	305
73. Diagram 7.29: Financial Modes of the Loans Adopted by the Female Entrepreneurs.	307
74. Diagram 7.30: Female Entrepreneurs' Opinion of the Loan Procedures.	309
75. Diagram 7.31: Bank Processes.	310
76. Diagram 7.32: Bank Regulations and the Appropriateness of the Microcredit Grace Period.	312
77. Diagram 7.33: Sufficiency of the Loan Size.	314
78. Diagram 7.34: Appropriateness of the Period of Instalments.	315
79. Diagram 7.35: Periods of Payment of Instalments.	317
80. Diagram 7.36: Payment of the Instalments.	318
81. Diagram 7.37: Problems and Risks Facing Female Entrepreneurs in the Payment of the Instalments.	319
82. Diagram 7.38: Coping Strategies Adopted by the Female Entrepreneurs.	320

83. Diagram 7.39: Performance of the SWGU Revolving Loan Fund and the Credit Projects up to 2005.	322
84. Diagram 7.40: Allocated Fund for the SWGU Savings & Microcredit and Revolving Loan Fund Projects up to 2005.	323
85. Diagram 7.41: Performance of the SWGU Zakat Fund for Poverty Alleviation Revolving Loan Fund Projects up to 2005.	323
86. Diagram 7.42: Performance of the SWGU SudaTel Savings & Microcredit Projects up to 2005.	324
87. Diagram 8.1: Distribution of Female Entrepreneurs by Age.	341
88. Diagram 8.2: Educational Level of the Female Entrepreneurs.	345
89. Diagram 8.3: Marital Status of the Female Entrepreneurs.	347
90. Diagram 8.4: Number of Children.	349
91. Diagram 8.5: Female Entrepreneurs' Family Members.	351
92. Diagram 8.6: Percentage Distribution of Households Ownership of Assets.	354
93. Diagram 8.7: Percentage Distribution of Households without Assets.	354
94. Diagram 8.8: Percentage Distribution of Households According to Type of Accommodation and Type of Holding.	357
95. Diagram 8.9: Percentage Distribution of Households According to Source of Water.	358
96. Diagram 8.10: Diagram No (96): Distribution Percentage of Households According to Source of Electricity.	359
97. Diagram 8.11: Uses of the Loan	360
98. Diagram 8.12: Use of the Loan for its Intended Purpose.	362
99. Diagram 8.13: Increase in Production.	363
100. Diagram 8.14: Gaining of Profit.	364
101. Diagram 8.15: Improvement of the Family Income.	366
102. Diagram 8.16: Household Expenditures	368
103. Diagram 8.17: Female Entrepreneurs Managed to Save.	378

Annexes: Tables	Page
1. Table 4.12: Participation of Women in Professional Institutions, 2001.	427
2. Table 4.18: Poverty Indices According to Region of Residence, Gender, Sector of Employment, Education Level and Mode of Living of Head of Household (1990, 1996)	428
3. Table 4.20: Infant And Child Mortality (per 1,000 live births).	429
4. Table 4.21: Vaccinations Of Children Age 12-23 Months In Northern Sudan 2000	430
5. Table 4.22:Birth Attendants for Women Giving Birth In North Sudan 1999	431
6. Table 4.23:Measures of Internal Efficiency (1998- 1999)	432
7. Table 4.24: Repetition Rate in Primary Education1998/99 (percent)	433
8. Table 4.25:Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios in Basic Education 1998/1999	434
9. Table 4.26:Students Enrolled in Government Universities According to International Classification for Education for the Academic Years 1990/1991-2000/2000	435
10. Table 4.27:Percent of population above 15 years that is literate	436
11. Table 4.28:Drinking Water Sources in Northern Sudan (percent of population)	437
12. Table 4.29:Excreta Disposal in Northern Sudan (percent of population)	438

Annexes: Figures	Page
1. Figure 4.1: Annual Inflation Rates (%), Greater Khartoum And Sudan, 1971-1996	439
2. Figure 4.2: Participation In Economic Activity And Unemployment, North Sudan, Individuals (10+) By Gender And Urban/Rural Residence,1990 &1996	440
3. Figure 4.3: Occupational Structure of the Labour Force, North Sudan, Individuals (6+) by Gender and Urban/Rural Residence, 1996	441
4. Figure 4.4: Unemployment Rate (%) by Age and Gender, Individuals (6+), North Sudan, 1996 .	442
5. Figure 4.5:Unemployment Rate (%) by Educational Attainment and Gender,	

Individuals (6+), North Sudan, 1996 443

Annexes: Charts	Page
1. Chart 6.1: Matrix Plan for the Economic Development Secretariat - Sudanese Women General Unions: 1999- 2005	444
2. Chart 6.2: Sudanese Women General Union Organigram	451
3. Chart 6.3: Hierarchal Structure for the Sudanese Women General Union Female Savings and Micro-credit Projects.	452

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Acronyms

BOS	Bank of Sudan
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CNS	Comprehensive National Strategy
FHH	Female Headed Household
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratios
ICA	International Cooperative Alliance
ILO	International Labour Organisation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MFI	Microfinance Institution
MFPs	Micro-finance Programmes
MMSs	Ministry of Manpower Surveys
MOM	Ministry of Manpower
MOWSD	Ministry of Welfare and Social Development
NCPRS	National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy
NCEP	National Council for Economic Planning
NER	Net Enrolment Ratios
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations

NIF	National Islamic Front
NSDF	National Slum Dwellers Federation
PFA	Platform for Action
PL&A	Participatory Learning and Action
PPAs	Participatory Poverty Assessments
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategy Policies
QCSFAW	Quarter -Century Strategy for the Advancement of Women (2003-2027).
SANU	Sudan African National Union
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programmes
SD	Sudanese Dinar
SEWA	Self-Employed Women's Association
SEWU	Self Employed Women's Union
SMDGs R	Sudanese Millennium Development Goals Report
SMS	Safe Motherhood Survey
SPARC	Society for Promotion of Ama Resource Centres
SudaTel:	Sudan Telecommunication Corporation
SWGU	Sudanese General Women's Union
SWU	Sudanese Women's Union

TBA	Traditional Birth Attendance
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Fund
WB	World Bank
WID	Women in Development
WSSD	World Summit for Social Development

Glossary

Al Amm: General work.

Al Bait Al Sudani: Sudan house

Al Jamahi: Group.

Al Zwaj: Marriage.

Al Salih: To end the services for the sake of benefit.

Feminisation of poverty: The term means three distinct things: that women have a higher incidence of poverty than men; that their poverty is more severe than that of men; that there is a trend to greater poverty among women, particularly associated with rising rates of FHHs

Gard: Loan/ Credit

Hassan: Benevolent or loan/ credit exempted from the interest.

Khata: Traditional rotating saving fun promotes and encourages women to start savings groups before receiving the credit. SWGU stipulate that women should be member in this traditional saving fund or having gold to be used in emergency situation such as in case of default to repay the instalment, etc.

Mahfazat: Wallet / Fund.

Microcredit: Is the extension of very small loans (micro loans) to those in poverty designed to spur entrepreneurship. Microcredit is a financial innovation system of offering tiny loans and credit to meet the needs of the extremely poor and to enable them to engage in self-employment projects that allow them to generate an income and, in many cases, begin to build wealth and exit

poverty. Microcredit gives poor people access to credit from a diversity of microfinancial institutions (MFIs) they need to exploit income-earning opportunities, meet life-cycle basic needs and cope with emergencies.

Micro-enterprise: Individual or group self employment enterprise or small business (smaller than small enterprise) characterized by using traditional technology in the production process, employing fewer than ten workers and it's a home-based enterprise (Tea sellers individual enterprise and the group cheese producer of Kazagil Production Centre). Those women who found these micro-enterprises are usually referred to as entrepreneurs.

Microfinance: Microfinance covers a broader range of financial services that create a wider range of opportunities for success. It refers to the provision of sustainable financial services such as loan, savings, money transfer, micro-insurance services, housing loans and remittance transfers to low income people on very small scale. It is a tool for helping poor to escape poverty and start and grow their business. The local MFI might also offer microfinance plus activities such as entrepreneurial and life skills training, and advice on topics such as health and nutrition, sanitation, improving living conditions, and the importance of educating children.

Murabaha: Is a buy and resell contract. The bank purchases the goods ordered by the client and resells it to the customer at a higher price (markup), usually on a deferred payment basis. This is the preferred instrument from the banks' point of view, and it is also the instrument that is most close to conventional interest-bearing financial contracts. Banks are allowed to have a maximum of 30 percent Murabaha contracts in their portfolios, and 12 percent is considered as markup.

Mudharaba: Is also a partnership contract, wherein the bank and the client share a project, but the bank provides the capital, whereas the client provides labour. The profit is shared according to an agreed-upon ratio, but if there is a loss, the bank loses its financial input.

Musharaka: Is a partnership contract, wherein the bank and its client share a project and its profit. Ownership is distributed according to each party's share in the financing. Profits are shared according to an agreed-upon ratio, but losses are shared according to ownership

Naieb: Chairperson of parliament sub committees.

Revolving Loan Funds: RLF is the microfinance mechanism used by Zakat Social Development Fund and applied by the SWGU for the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) projects. The target women obtain the micro loan to start or expand their income-generating activities. These RLFs are managed by staffs of the SWGU at state level who are more concerned about disbursements of the loan. RLFs are intended to continue to revolve after the project ends for the purpose of stating with new borrowers.

Salaam: Is also a buy and resell contract, but exactly the opposite of Murabaha, in the sense that the bank purchases the good from its client, but the client delivers the goods at a later point in time. This contract is used mostly for agriculture. The bank pays the farmer on the day the contract is signed and the farmer delivers the crop to the bank after harvest.

Samin: Ghee

Savings: The SWGU Savings and Microcredit projects provide credit first and adopt the Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) as a saving –based for the mobilisation of savings from the poor women to raise sufficient funds for lending. Once the groups have sufficient savings and can demonstrate their discipline (e.g., through attendance records and good repayments on internal loans) they can use this fund to lend new individual member for income-generating activities.

Small-enterprise: Using traditional technologies, but increasingly switching over to modern technologies, using modern technologies and increasingly linking up with the rest of the economy in general and large industry in particular. (Such as the Group Female Entrepreneurs at Milk Production Center - Kazagail and Fetihab Production Centre).

Soak Libya: Market and Libya literally refers to the Arabic country Libya

Sustainable: In general terms, sustainability is the ability to maintain balance of a certain process or state in any system. For the purpose of the study it means that those financial services can be accessed over the long-term, when and if people need to access them.

Zakat: Charity.

Chapter One: Introduction

. Background information

The issues concerning women and their participation in the development process have been increasingly researched over the years. However, the ways of addressing these issues have varied based on the understanding of women's positions in the development process in addition to a growing interest in the gender role. In 1948 the UN Declaration on Human Rights included the principle of equality between men and women, but the majority of the development planners and workers did not fully address women's positions in the development process. Views on women's position in development have changed throughout the years. During the 1950s and 1960s women's issues in development were subsumed under the question of human rights and women were viewed as objects to make recommendations about, but not to be consulted.

Mayoux (2005:3) mentioned that from the early 1970s women's movements in a number of countries became increasingly interested in the degree to which women were able to access poverty-focused credit programmes and credit cooperatives. More over she added that 'The problem of women's access to credit was given particular emphasis at the first International Women's Conference in Mexico in 1975 as part of the emerging awareness of the importance of women's productive role both for national economies, and for women's rights. This led to the setting up of the Women's World Banking network and production of manuals for women's credit provision (Mayoux 2005:3).

By the end of the 1970s, the question of alleviating and eradicating poverty was taking centre stage in the arena of international concerns. This was reflected in the international development strategy formulated for the third United Nations Development Decade, which considered the elimination of poverty to be the aim of the international community and set the end of the 20th century as the final date for the elimination of poverty and malnutrition. This strategy also stressed the important role of women in development and emphasized the aim of achieving full employment by the year 2000. Accordingly, in the 1970s women's key positions in development were widely recognised. This was especially so in connection with poverty eradication, population and food issues. By ending of targeting women as useful resources to be integrated into the development process the macro-economic policies and development strategies had been reviewed. The laws and administrative practices had been

revised to ensure women's equal rights and access to economic resources. Savings and credit mechanisms and institutions had been provided to enable poor women get access to credit.

Following this drive, in the 1980s there was global recognition that fighting poverty could be achieved through the initiatives of microcredit programmes targeting women who were seen as economically and socially more vulnerable. Thus microcredit programmes were developed to address the economic and social needs of vulnerable women and to reduce the traditional financial and institutional discriminations of which they were the victims. The aim of microcredit is to provide women with access to credit at low interest rates and give them the opportunity to develop different income-generating activities, set up small businesses or buy equipment to develop activities in various fields like agriculture, animal husbandry, fishing or the craft industry in order to help them stabilize their household economy and, ideally, improve their living conditions.

From that time many poverty alleviation strategies were formulated in the developing countries that have disbursed microcredit to poor women. The implementation of such programmes is often performed in partnership with non-governmental organizations that work at grassroots level. Most programmes rely on women's self-help groups to monitor and collect repayments. Microcredit is mainly accessed through specialized institutions such as the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India and the Viet Nam Bank for the Poor. State-controlled financial institutions like Bank Rakyat Indonesia and the government-funded microcredit institution Amanah Ikhtiar in Malaysia also disburse microcredit.

The ways of approaching vulnerable women and satisfying their needs are varied. Some concentrate on practical needs, especially economic activities such as Self-Employed Women's Associations (SEWA) in Ahmedabad. Others try to satisfy both women's practical and strategic needs such as National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) in Mumbai that deals with economic, political and social aspects.

In fact, the microcredit approach is inspired by practices that are developed in Asia and Africa such as local credit and savings funds and, more specifically, by the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh, the home of modern' microcredit institutions. The Grameen was founded by the economics professor Muhammad Yunus. Between 1976 and 1983 Yunus initially gave a 27

loan, without demanding collateral, to a small group of village women whose households lacked the resources to be engaged in income-generating activities, lacked the entrepreneurial abilities and self discipline to make effective use of the microcredit. It has been motioned that this was the beginning of a bank that has been widely acclaimed for its success in promoting sustainable and equitable development (Saaid 2006: 9). Pitt and Khandker (1996: 42-43) mentioned that that targeted credit programs such as the Grameen Bank can empower women by increasing their contribution to household consumption expenditure, their hours devoted to production for the market, and the value of their assets.

In addition to Grameen Bank there are also successful micro-finance/credit programmes that mobilize women first on non-banking related issues and once the social mobilization process has been strengthened, micro-finance/credit issues are raised. Riitta Soveri (1999:13) provided some good examples of Self-Employed Women's Associations (SEWA) in Ahmedabad, India, which first organized women on issues related to the informal economy. SEWA is a women's self-help organization for poverty alleviation established in 1971 in Ahmedabad, India and recognized as a trade union in 1972. In 1974-self employed women established the SEWA Bank as a cooperative bank with the specific objective of providing credit to self- employed women to empower them to reduce dependency on money lenders. SEWA Bank works only with poor women and loans were only available for economic activities and not for personal use. The bank employs *women saving mobilizers* to encourage women to save with the bank. Thus, building on the work of SEWA in India and other organisations in the South, the problem of women's access to credit was given particular emphasis at the first International Women's Conference in Mexico in 1975.

The National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSDF) in Mumbai is another example of an organization that came into being in a similar manner to those described above. It first organized pavement dwellers on issues of land tenure and housing rights and only later embarked on microcredit and banking for the poor. Another example is Mahila Milan (Mahila Milan means women together in Hindi) Credit Scheme, a foundation of collectives of women pavement dwellers in Mumbai. With the assistance of the Society for Promotion of Ama Resource Centres (SPARC), the programme included forming a cooperative, Milan Nager, seeking an alternative land site for housing, opening bank accounts, provision of food and clothes and provision of emergency loans. The credit system was managed by the women pavement dwellers themselves.

Other successful examples can be cited from the International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) for supporting the efforts of Tanzanian business women to plough some of the little money they have saved into income generating projects. The idea is to support credit schemes among women cooperative members. Riitta Soveri (1999:10) mentioned that women, who make up more than half of the country's population of 28 million people, find that the first hurdle to setting up a business is access to credit. Getting a loan from the commercial bank requires filling lot of forms, and intrusive questioning. The process is meant for literate and educated rich women with collateral who could pay a high interest rate. International Cooperative Alliance (ICA) is a non-profit organization founded in 1895 with the aim of uniting, representing, and serving cooperatives all over the world. ICA programmes were tailored by the ICA-Kilimanjaro. Tanzania set up Savings and Credit Cooperatives (SACCOS) to raise capital for business. Women contribute to form women's credit associations (Massasa) to borrow not more than half of what they have contributed and repay the credit with a low interest rate of 2%. This proved that women can work and improve their lives if they get help setting up an association.

Other Tanzanian indigenous user-owned institutions are the Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs) that can be defined as an association formed upon a core of participants who make regular contributions to a fund which is given in whole or in part to each contributor in turn (Ardener and Burman 1995:1). While ROSCAs take different forms, most are organised as insurance funds and are managed by community members. In this sense they operate on the principle of self-help and are described as the world's most efficient and cheapest financial intermediary device (Rutherford 2000: 32). Perhaps the most common source of informal finance is loans from family and friends, characterised by uncollateralised credit that carries little or no interest. These are typically small loans, with open-ended repayment arrangements and a strong focus on reciprocity. They are usually intended to meet the consumption and contingency needs of households, rather than to build investment capability.

Self-Employed Women's Union (SEWU) is a new trade union for self employed women in South Africa. As it has been mentioned by Riitta Soveri (1999:9) in South Africa women predominate in low-wage, less secure jobs and with low skills. In addition women tend to have problems with access to credit and educational facilities. Their work in invisible economic activities is subject to exploitation. Thus the aim is to support women who are self

employed and help them acquire recognition for the work they do. In South Africa however, self employment is rarely a choice, but a need. Women have no other option than to start up their own businesses as this is the only way to generate income. SEWU's objectives are to build unity between women whose work is not organized, help women develop negotiation skills so that they can negotiate with city councils, police, civic and political organizations assist women with legal advice, and develop leadership skills of female entrepreneurs who work outside the formal sector.

Another successful micro-finance scheme is the mobile banks in the West African market places that handle deposits from vendors who work as agents for larger businesses, money lenders, and other economically empowered individuals. Mobile banks offer the convenience of bringing banking services directly to their places of activities during working hours and the possibility of opening a line of credit under better conditions than a formal bank. In Abidjan, market vendors, both male and female, see little risk in investing their money with someone who comes around daily, and they develop relationships of trust by negotiating with one individual and not with many as is the case of other savings associations. Microfinance schemes create some problems for women as mentioned by Nteziyaremye, Stack and MkNelly (2001:3) poor women from poorest third in the community talked about how hard it was to make their repayments and few described real progression in their socioeconomic status .all had relatively weak local markets the weekly repayment schedule is also more difficult for poor households because they lack alternative means or sources of income from which they can repay their CEE loan. For this same reason, the poorer members are also at particular risk if there is a sickness or death in the family.

Developing countries have become interested in establishing small enterprises during the early 1990s but questions relating to women entrepreneurs engaged in micro and small enterprises were raised in the late 1980s. An example of this was the new focus of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and member countries to adopt strategies that ensure that gender issues and equality concerns are integrated within its programmes, projects and activities. Access to credit was seen as vital to women's ability to earn an income and contribute to an increase in women's status. At the same time, a number of studies have questioned any flow of automatic programme benefits to women (Goetz and Sengupta 1996; Ebdon, R. 1995; Hulme and Mosley 1996; Johnson and Rogaly 1997). In the 1990s the critiques of existing models of micro-finance as a tool for poverty alleviation have questioned

that how women will be automatically benefited from such programme. The criticism was directed towards measuring well-being while analysing the household as a unit, in terms of consumption and income only without questioning the intra-household dynamics and relationships of inequalities in resource distribution. It has been argued that At household level, income and consumption-based measures do not provide a good predictor of women's well-being because of intra-household inequalities in resource distribution and other institutional biases (Baden 1999:12). This situation has led to pressure for gender impact studies and evaluations of micro-finance programmes. Thus impact assessment becomes a crucial tool for ensuring that the potential contributions of micro-finance to women's empowerment are realised in practice.

In broader work on poverty, and especially in policy circles, poverty among female-headed households became a common representation of women's poverty, if not poverty in general. In summary Female headship rapidly became the accepted discourse about gender and poverty among international agencies (Kabeer 2003:81). It has been mentioned that that households headed by females with dependent children, experience the worst afflictions of poverty. Female-headed households are the poorest (Bibars 2001:67).

The issue of eradicating poverty was one of three main issues raised at the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) in Copenhagen, Denmark, 6-12 March 1995. Alongside the two issues of expansion of productive employment and reduction of unemployment and social integration heads of state and governments committed themselves during this summit to the goal of eradicating poverty in the world through decisive national actions and international cooperation, as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative for humankind (UNDP1995:14).

Also during the 1990s women's equal access to microcredit through microfinance institutions began to be considered as a human rights issue. Microfinance enables female entrepreneurs to access to financial sustainable services such as microcredit. As an outcome of the confusing terminology the terms 'microcredit' and 'microfinance' are not used interchangeably. However 'microcredit' and 'microfinance' are not identical concepts as microfinance includes access to a range of financial services and products, including credit, savings, money transfers, insurance and asset-building mechanisms required by the unique and widely varying

needs of poor people to enhance their ability to increase incomes and mitigate vulnerability in times of economic stress.

Micro-finance can be described as the provision of financial services dealing with very small deposits and loans (Bastelaer 1999:6). Microcredit is an important system of offering tiny loan for reducing women's poverty it has been an explicit focus of a variety of human rights instruments. Both the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) address women's access to financial resources to enable poor women to gain access to credit. Microcredit gives poor women access to credit from a diversity of microfinancial institutions (MFIs) they need to exploit income-earning opportunities, meet life-cycle basic needs, cope with emergencies etc.

International and national instruments that establish women's rights to microfinance, promote government responsibility and accountability in meeting commitments to women's rights. Since then, the term 'empowerment' has become widespread within the gender and development spheres, with the stated aim of increasing the number of development interventions, particularly those relating to poverty reduction and to empower women. One of the most common objectives is to enhance women's capacity to make choices, which is often envisaged as best achieved through raising their access to resources as reflected in the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) 1995 and United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM) 2000. (UNDP1995; UNIFEM 2000).

During this time, Micro-finance Programmes (MFPs) were promoted as the single most important mechanism for poverty alleviation and women's empowerment. The MFPs minimalist approach is designed to offer small amount of capital to women, replace formal monitoring procedures with social guarantees and rely on women's capacity for self-monitoring and cooperation to reach out to women who otherwise might have been excluded because of the small size of credit they require. MFPs are subscribed to by most donor agencies and non-government organizations focuses upon micro-credit delivery and marginalisation of issues concerning women's empowerment. The minimalist framework of MFP leads only to economic empowerment as stated by Hulme and Mosley (1996: 106) credit is seen as a mechanism for generating self-employment opportunities for the poor and improving the productivity of existing enterprises, referred to as the 'promotional' strategy. Empowerment is defined by Moser (1989:1815) as the capacity of women to increase their

own self-reliance and internal strength. This is identified as the right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change, through the ability to gain control over material and non-material resources. Microcredit leads to other kind of empowerment economic empowerment, expansion of individual choice and capacity for self-reliance (Mayoux 2005:4).

The MFPs minimalist approach, with its focus on financial sustainability, was being promoted as the way forward. While the new approaches of the MFPs focus in the integration of social processes of gender empowerment. In contrast to the minimalist approach, the integrated approach, referred to as the credit-plus approach (Johnson and Roglay, 1997:118) is grounded within the empowerment framework and attempts to deal with the structural causes of poverty through micro-finance delivery. It is a comprehensive approach aimed at providing a long-term integrated support package, in which loans are combined with social mobilisation, participation, training and education, so as to maximise the income, opportunities and empowerment impacts. The integrated approach advocates the building of linkages between the organised poor and existing mainstream banks or other formal financial institutions, rather than setting up parallel systems for service delivery. It takes the view that NGOs need to become promoters' of financial services, by helping the poor to set up financial services managed and owned by communities.

One can argue that economic empowerment doesn't always lead to a reversal in gender relationships. Therefore, there is a need for the integration of social processes framework of MFP to move poor women for more greater centrality, inclusion and voice that lead to strengthen women's self-esteem and self-worth instil a greater sense of awareness of social and political issues, leading to increased mobility and reduced traditional seclusion of women. Most importantly, MFPs should enable women to contribute to the household economy, increasing their intra-household bargaining power. Empowerment can be defined as a process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability for women to improve their ability to control resources, to determine agendas and make decisions, empowerment strategies must build on the power within' as a necessary adjunct (Kabeer 1994a:229).

There are many criticisms directed towards adopting the poverty line approach for measuring well-being as it ignores non-monetary resources through which people satisfy their survival

needs, especially the social capital generated among networks of kin, friends or neighbours. Kabeer emphasises this fact by adding that in addition to ignoring social capital the well-being of human beings, and what matters to them, does not only depend on their purchasing power, but on other less tangible aspects, such as dignity and self-respect (Kabeer 2003:80). Kabeer also appreciated the Participatory Poverty Assessments (PPAs) approach in contributing to gendered poverty analysis, notably by highlighting factors such as women's greater burden of 'time poverty', their vulnerability to domestic violence, and unequal decision-making (Kabeer 2003:99). Adopting PPAs had also been encouraged by 2001 because they reveal the perceptions of poverty at the household level, which is different by gender insofar as men usually define poverty as a lack of assets whereas women equate poverty with shortfalls in consumption, coupled with inability to provide for the family (May 2001:27). Johnsson-Latham has also argued that men frequently defined poverty in terms of lack of respect and self-esteem, yet no women seem to have regarded themselves entitled to demand respect (Johnsson-Latham 2002:4).

The primary practical requirement for incorporating a gender analysis into such programmes is to consult and listen to women so that their roles and resulting needs are better understood, thus enabling women to perform their existing roles better. This strategy is based on the recognition that women's equal participation is essential to the achievement of all development objectives, such as sustainable development, eradication of poverty, human rights and democracy. Gender is now regarded as a 'cross-cutting' issue in mainstream economic interventions such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Policies (PRSPs), with the notion that proposals should not only be gender-aware, but that women should be a vital part of the consultation process. The inclusion of a gender perspective within the poverty discourse is an ongoing process. In recent years while there has been an increased interest in focusing on the role of women in the reduction of poverty, in general, gender has been included as a variant on the poverty problem. That is, women have been added in to existing policies most usually for their capacity as efficient service providers rather than as people with rights, agenda and needs.

The gender research to analyse of poverty, has made significant advances towards the 'engendering' of poverty analysis since the 1970s. These developments have also helped in illustrating gendered dimensions of poverty as summed-up by Razavi: From a gender

perspective, broader concepts of poverty are more useful than a focus purely on household income levels because they allow a better grasp of the multidimensional aspects of gender disadvantage, such as lack of power to control important decisions that affect one's life (Razavi1999:417). The broad-based participation in policy making processes is not easy and may even lead to fragmentation among women. But Finne argued If women comprise 70% of impoverished people, how can they be left ignored in decisions that further contribute and create this extreme situation A beginning in alleviation (sic) rests on the power of women, representation and decision-making (Finne 2001:7).

This signifies interventions to redress gender inequalities in different spaces', such as the labour market, legal institutions, the home and so on. These interventions also confront different types, aspects and processes of poverty and inequality, extending beyond the material, physiological and objective', to the political, social, psychological and subjective. Williams and Lee-Smith sum up this argument by stating that The feminisation of poverty is more than a slogan: it is a marching call that impels us to question our assumptions about poverty itself by examining how it is caused, manifested and reduced, and to do this from a gender perspective (Williams & Lee-Smith 2000:1).

In this regard it is worth mentioning that during the Beijing+5 review conference held in 2000, a political declaration was made, which among other things, emphasizes the need for men and women to take joint responsibility for the promotion of gender equality. The Conference noted some achievements regarding critical areas of concern in relation to women and poverty, about increasing recognition of the gender dimensions of poverty; and recognised that gender equality is one of the important factors for eradicating poverty, particularly the feminization of poverty. The obstacles identified include widening economic inequality between women and men; unequal access to, and control over, capital, particularly land and credit and access to labour markets; gender inequalities and disparities in power-sharing; harmful, traditional and customary practices. The conference also developed further action and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action (PFA). At government level, this includes actions to ensure national legislative and administrative reform processes, including those linked to land reforms; decentralization and economic reforms; promoting women's rights, particularly women living in poverty. The same processes should promote women's access to and control over economic resources,

including land, property, and rights to inheritance, credit, and traditional savings schemes such as women's banks or cooperatives.

Recently, women's empowerment has been regarded as an important perspective for microfinance policies and programmes as microfinance is considered as an effective means or entry point for empowering women. It has been mentioned that By putting financial resources in the hands of women, micro-finance institutions help level the playing field and promote gender equality (Cheston & Kuhn 2002:11). The women's empowerment has also been supported because early gender research flagged up the paradox whereby women's considerable inputs to household survival went unmatched by social recognition, either within the context of their families and communities or in society at large 'silenced' and 'hidden' nature of women's lives highlighted that there was more than a material dimension to gendered hardship and subordination (Chant 2003b:4). It has been asserted that poverty alleviation which serves as a pivot on which multiplicity of mitigating programmes revolves, has a definitional problem in terms of its appropriateness or relevance (Chant 2003a:6). Thus, women's empowerment has been seen as a function of women's relative physical mobility, economic security, ability to make purchases on their own, freedom from domination and violence within their family, political and legal awareness and participation in public protests and political campaigning.

The modern microcredit movement based on the centuries-old system of 'trust-based' lending supports and promotes micro-enterprises that generate productive self-employment and income, helping poor, marginalised people living below a dollar (1) a day, move out of the vicious cycle of poverty, particularly in developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America. This powerful anti-poverty tool, especially in the hands of poor women, demonstrates that poor people's creative potential to improve their quality of life when the right opportunity exists and allows them to reap the benefits of their skills and hard work, with dignity. The year 2005 has been declared as the UN International Year of Microcredit and many NGOs celebrated the event globally. Such innovative partnerships among governments, donors, non-governmental organisations and the private sector undoubtedly helped create a much bigger opportunity for many of the unrecognised micro entrepreneurs. Empirical evidence of intervention programmes designed to reach women working in microcredit projects suggests that borrowers of microcredit were able to increase their incomes, acquire assets and reduce their vulnerability to crises. Microcredit and micro-finance

has enabled the un-bankable poor to use their ingenuity to fight their way out of the poverty trap. We can add to this list other valuable indicators of women's empowerment, such as social network expanding, visibility within the community and empowerment in decision-making at household level. There is no doubt that MFPs have been successful in reaching women, particularly given the challenging socio-cultural conditions in which they live. However, in the context of MFPs programme interventions being increasingly promoted as a mechanism for women's empowerment, it becomes essential to analyse and determine the nature and extent of empowerment promoted by them.

.2 Problem statement of the study

In Sudan there is an increased poverty rate reflected in high decrease of social services provision and gender differentials especially in educational, employment and earnings. These can be illustrated in the high rate of school dropout and repetition among female than male students while the primary rate enrolment is lower in female than male students. There are several healthcare issues like high infant mortality and under-five mortality rate in various states; increase in children diseases; malnutrition; malaria; less coverage in vaccination; health services that do not reach all children especially the poor and to those unable to pay medical charges. The unemployment rate among women is high, women earn less in formal economic activities than men and unequal presence of women for high wage jobs in the Government. Women are also vulnerable to keep jobs, and not considered for certain job opportunities. Women generally tend to earn less for their work in formal activities than men. In rural and urban areas, inequality in distribution of personal income persists and the consumption level within the female headed households is greater than within the male headed households. Also households headed by women tend to get lower level of social welfare. Further to that, women lack the capacity to take advantage of potential economic opportunities, lack the access and control of resources (Technologies, capital & material), and have food insecurity.

Therefore, the core problem which will be addressed by the study can be stated in the following:

The majority of poor women who live with low or no income are either belong to female headed household or are economically dependent on their husbands' income and are burdened with their household activities or responsibilities to feed, educate and take care of their children. Moreover, they encounter a core problem which is the lack of access to microcredit and financial services to increase their earnings, own their assets, control over their own income, increase their bargaining power in the household, influence over economic, social and political decision-making, empower themselves economically, socially and politically, and improve their status.

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. **Objective of the study**

The primary objective of this study is, therefore, to examine the impact of women's empowerment promoted by savings and microcredit projects launched by the Sudanese General Women Union (SWGU) in Sudan as a strategy for simultaneously addressing both poverty alleviation and women's empowerment.

The underlying assumption is that participation in savings and microcredit projects promotes the personal, social, economic and political empowerment of women. The study is anchored in the premise that issues of empowerment and transformation need to be located within the individual subjects' social, cultural and historical context. In other words, it takes into consideration the way women actively transform their reality within the social constraints of their lives. By doing so, it recognises the plurality of voices and multiple realities that such an exploration leads to. The idea is not to resolve or dissolve the paradoxes, uncertainties and contradictions that emerge from the study, but in fact to recognise the tensions involved in analysing issues relating to women's empowerment.

. **Secondary objectives of the study**

The secondary objectives include the following:

- Assessing the female entrepreneurs' perception about poverty, the enhancing perception of female entrepreneurs' contribution to the household income and the family welfare, increasing women's participation in household decisions about the expenditure and other issues and leading to greater expenditures on women's welfare.

- Assessing how the female entrepreneurs are empowered enough to participate in the whole processes of the microcredit projects cycle and decide on their economic activities. As well as assessing their abilities to manage and control their saving and microcredit projects.
- Assessing the female entrepreneurs' gaining of wider experiences outside the home due to of access to microcredit, increasing mobility, access to information and the possibility of developing other political and social role.
- Assessing the economic independency in terms of increasing the household income level, control over income and ownership of the microcredit projects.
- Assessing the ways in which the microfinance institutions operate in delivering the savings and microcredit projects and the role of the SWGU in contributing to women's economic empowerment.
- Assessing the links created between the SWGU institutions at all levels and the national financial institutions, banks and ministries that have concerns in female microcredit and savings activities.

• **Research questions**

The study will cover data collection and analysis the impact indicators of SWGU savings and microcredit projects on three levels: personal, business operation, and the family or the intra-household relationships. In this regard, the following questions will be addressed:

- The female entrepreneurs' perception about poverty situations of their household and the empowerment. Other personal questions in terms of the age, education, marital status of entrepreneurs and family sizes.
- The female entrepreneur's perception and motivation of starting an informal sector business. And the practical (immediate) term objectives and the strategic (long) term objectives of selecting their savings and microcredit projects. The need of female entrepreneurs to engage in economic activities or the reasons that motivate them to enter these economic activities.
- The internal or external factors that motivate the women to undertake economic activities. The conditions under which the women entrepreneurs decide to enter informal sectors and initiate business. Are they satisfying their needs

- Also questions related to the various kinds of savings and micro-credit projects selected by the female entrepreneurs. Investigate the push and pull (incentive) factors and their root-causes under which the women operate. Which of the factors has stronger impact on women's decision to establish their business and which factors need to be supported and why
- The female entrepreneur's educational status, skills and their abilities to search for marketing opportunities, additional financial resources, technical information that will assist in the management and expansion of their microcredit projects. What kinds of technical capacity building are offered by the SWGU Microcredit project to support and develop women' business.
- The business features of female entrepreneurs including capital, performance of their savings and microcredit projects, income and savings. Questions related to the sizes of microcredit, the bank processes and mode of funding. What are the obstacles facing female entrepreneurs when dealing with the banks/financial institutions that support their savings and microcredit projects . The income and cost of entrepreneurs' economic activities Are female entrepreneurs able to save money from earnings Which group is able to save more and why Investigation on how the women entrepreneurs use the income from their business and who control the income
- The constrain facing the female entrepreneurs in their work and identify the negative impacts of the savings and microcredit projects in terms of increasing heavy workload, repayment pressures, etc. What is needed to be done to tackle these constraints
- The performance level of female entrepreneurs' business Do women manage their business by themselves or with hired labour Who established the business The risks facing female entrepreneurs and the strategies used by women entrepreneurs to meet needs relating to the survival of their business, competition, saving, meeting seasonal fluctuation and targeted market.
- Access to microcredit, questions related to microfinance institutions supporting saving and microcredit projects; financial policies adopted by the micro financial institutions; mechanisms used to channels the fund to reach poor female entrepreneurs; the microfinance system adopted by the microfinance institutions; and budget allocated to be disbursed to empower female entrepreneurs.
- The role of the SWGU in coordinating and administering the savings and microcredit projects. The structure required to administer the savings and microcredit projects at all levels and capacity building of the SWGU staff in microfinance system and the

administration of the savings and microcredit projects. Questions about the linkages created with other concerned financial institutions to run the savings and microcredit projects.

The questionnaire has been designed based on these issues and is attached as Annexes-2 page 453-492.

. **Overview of methodology**

The research design was developed based on the combination of secondary data and primary data methods. Secondary data is mainly quantitative statistical information collected from the national surveys, censuses, studies and reports. It is collected to complement the primary data. The primary data was collected from the field works and it is a qualitative data collected from the four categories of the study sample of the female entrepreneurs to reflect their opinions, attitudes, perceptions and viewpoints on the savings microcredit projects.

The secondary data collection techniques include a review of information and the statistical data from national statistical surveys and the national censuses, studies reports related to the situation of women in Sudan, SWGU microcredit projects studies and reports as well as the annual and monthly financial reports. Monthly reports of the microcredit projects at the state and grassroots levels, SWGU conferences' papers and strategy papers, SWGU strategic plan of economic activities, and minutes of meetings are also reviewed. The primary data collection is the empirical field research using qualitative participatory research techniques which include group discussions and in depth interviews to collect information about the female entrepreneurs' perceptions, aspirations and strategies of poverty situation at the household level and the impact of the savings and microcredit projects in alleviating the poverty and empowering their status.

This sample consists of 300 female entrepreneurs divided into four groups: Thowra and Tea sellers groups that represent poor female entrepreneurs and Khalawi-Fetihab and Kazagil production centre which represent very poor female entrepreneurs from female headed households. The first sample group consists of 100 market-based female workers: tea sellers who are located in Khartoum State, Omdurman Province, Ombada Locality at Soak Libya. The second study group, Al Thowra consists of 100 home-based female workers. The third study group is Al Fetihab-Khalawi group which consists of 80 market-based female workers.

Al Fetihab is located in southern part of Omdurman town. The fourth study group is Kazagil Locality, which consists of 20 female entrepreneurs from the milk production centre. Kazagil is located at North Kordufan state, Al Obied Province. The main reason for choosing these four groups is because of variation in the kinds of the credit, economic activities undertaken by each group, the product orientation and the economic status of each group. Controlled group consisted of 300 female entrepreneurs from the same categories mentioned above but who started their savings and credit projects recently had been included in the sample.

Techniques of data collection consisted of guideline to collect and analyze data in a participatory manner using techniques associated with Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) to collect the qualitative data through the means of focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and the questionnaire. The research methodology will be discussed in greater depth in chapter 3.

. Structure of the study

Chapter one provides important information about poverty alleviation and women' empowerment and the adoption of the mechanism of micro- finance/credit as a tool to tackle development issues globally and implement the microcredit programmes. The chapter assists in formulating the statement problem study and setting the objectives and the questions needing to be addressed by the study. The chapter ends with the overview of the research methodology and the structure of the study.

Chapter two consists of the theoretical and conceptual framework that illustrates the relevant literature related to the development theories mainly the theoretical models of an entrepreneur, household micro-economics models, vulnerability, coping and diversification models, and empowerment models.

Chapter three deals with the methodology of the research and gives more details on the research techniques and the sample of the study which deals with the size of the groups; criteria for the selection; locations , the administration of the questionnaire and the constraints that face the research methodology.

Chapter four comprises an overview on the feminisation of poverty in Sudan. The chapter provides details on the factors affecting women's vulnerability, mainly political factors. The chapter also provides information on the feminisation of poverty in Sudan in terms of quality of women's representation, women's ability to take part in effective decision making processes and to be allowed to tackle the root causes of feminisation of poverty. Information on the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) and their impacts at household levels in terms of decline in wages, inflation, increasing rate of unemployment, migration, increasing number of female headed households and neglect of entrepreneurship has been described. Other impacts of SAP is the social impact that have been reflected in the phenomenon of homeless children, morbidity and mortality (under-recorded), school dropouts and absenteeism and lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Chapter five deals with poverty policy and regularity that assist in studying and collecting data on the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy. The strategy was formulated by the government to alleviate poverty and consisted of two major components: i) the poverty reduction through infrastructural services projects and ii) the social mobilization for solidarity and production programme. More emphasis has been devoted to the social mobilization for solidarity and production programme and the family productive policy and its micro-finance/ credit projects. The chapter also provides information and statistical data on the financial institutions and their contribution to implement the strategy such as Zakat Social Solidarity Fund, Credit and Social Development Bank, SudaTel Corporation, the Agriculture Bank and other supportive financial institutions. The social mobilization for solidarity and production programme has been administered by the Ministry of Social Welfare-Social Development Authority. The Authority was established with clear objectives and strategies that focus on capacity building and human development, marketing and savings and micro-finance/ credit projects, coordination with related organizations and budgeting for family productive activities. Finally, the chapter provides a brief summary about the achievements and the impacts of the social mobilization for solidarity and production programme.

Chapter six helps in understanding the role of the Sudanese Women General Union (SWGU) in adopting the tools of micro-finance/credit and revolving loan system to alleviate poverty and women's vulnerability and to empower female entrepreneurs. The chapter highlights the SWGU Charter that includes principles of political participation, the family, sustainable development and human rights, education and health and peace and security. Also the chapter

details the major objectives of the SWGU and the hierarchical structure of the SWGU at the national, state and grassroots levels that facilitate the implementation of the comprehensive poverty reduction strategy, the social mobilization for solidarity and production program and facilitate poor women to get access to financial resources. The chapter explains the role of the SWGU in establishing financial policy with the financing institutions for the implementing the micro-finance/credit and revolving loan projects to alleviate poverty and reduce women's vulnerability and empower female entrepreneurs. The formal financial institutions, the mode of finance and policies and regulations have been explained in detail. The chapter also discusses the informal institutions/social institutions policy adopted by the female entrepreneurs to sustain their microcredit and to expand their projects. Finally, the chapter concludes with a briefing on the role of national non-governmental organisations for implementing the micro-finance/ credit and revolving loan projects under the umbrella of SWGU.

Chapter seven describes the saving and microcredit projects of SWGU and illustrates the various kinds of female entrepreneurs' saving and microcredit projects and the objectives identified by the female entrepreneurs for participating in these projects. Personal information about the female entrepreneur's beneficiaries is explained in terms of the initiation of the idea of the saving and microcredit projects. Communication channels and the advertisement system facilitate the female entrepreneurs in acquiring knowledge about the saving and micro-finance / credit projects and methods of reaching the banks. The chapter provides information on the financial institutions, funding the SWGU saving and micro-finance/credit projects, based on the SWGU Six Year Plan of 1999-2004. The chapter specifies the role of the financial institutions and the role of the SWGU, planned contributions of the financial institutions to the Southern States and the contributions by the financial institutions to the production centres. The chapter also details the policies of the financial institutions at grassroots level and explains the working of formal institutions at the study sample areas, the banks' support in funding the female saving and microfinance/credit projects, various kinds of loans adopted by the female entrepreneurs and the financial modes of the loans accessible to them. Also the chapter provides information about the opinions of female entrepreneurs on loan procedures and their complicated bank processes, formal institutions' regulations and their appropriateness, the sufficiency of the loan size, period of the instalments, problems and risks facing female entrepreneurs in the repayment of the instalments and the strategies adopted to mitigate these risks. The chapter ends by illustrating the administrative role played

by the SWGU in establishing the structure and consultative committees that assist in the implementation of the saving and microfinance/credit projects at the state and local levels, and the capacity building of the SWGU staff at all levels.

Chapter eight provides information about the impact of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects on poverty alleviation at the personal level in terms of the female entrepreneur's life cycle, educational level, marital status, parity, family members, household assets, household conditions and participation. Another level of impact is related to the increase in income and production of the existing projects, contribution to the household income and food expenditures. A third level of impact is the decision making ability of the female entrepreneurs to contribute to the education of children, improving healthcare and household conditions, and saving money.

Chapter nine provides summary information on the achievements of the SWGU as a NGO, the positive impacts of the saving and microcredit projects, the major constraints and risks faced by SWGU in saving and microcredit projects. The chapter ends with recommendations to mitigate these risks.

. **Conclusion**

The review of the micro finance mechanisms helped in providing details information on the concepts and the mechanisms of microcredit projects in various countries to empower women and alleviate their poverty, vulnerability and empower them based on various concepts of women's position in development, problems they encountered and what empowerment means to decision and policy makers. The chapter assists in formulating the study problems about poor women in Sudan, the objectives of the study and the questions need to be addressed by the study to reveal the economic, social and political status of women and the kind of empowerment gained as a result of obtaining access to credit. The chapter also provides overview on the methodology of the study and how the study is structured.

Chapter Two deals with the literature review of the various economic and social development theories and concepts that will assist in analysing various macro and micro-economic and social development strategies and policies; development issues related to women's poverty in general and the Sudanese women's problems in particular for poverty alleviation; and vulnerability and empowerment of poor women. Therefore, various concepts related to entrepreneurs and the household micro-economic models, intra-household bargaining and decision-making, cooperative conflict and bargaining concepts, intra-household and external social relationship, vulnerability, coping and diversification and empowerment concepts, will be discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Two: Theoretical and conceptual framework: an overview of women entrepreneurs and empowerment

2. Introduction

This chapter studies literature on economic and social development theories developed by different economic scholars and social anthropologists for the purpose of assessing the economic, political and social realities of the macro- economic and social policies of the poverty reduction strategy in Sudan and the integration of women into these policies. The chapter will also assess the microfinance mechanisms adopted by the Sudanese Women General Union (SWGU) and its impacts on female entrepreneurs to make recommendations for strengthening and empowering women in Sudan.

The discussion of the concepts of entrepreneur identified by the economist J.A. Schumpeter (1934), in his economic theory of the entrepreneur, will reveal the assumption that innovative female entrepreneurs play an important role for profit maximization and enterprise efficiency to increase household income.

The cooperative-conflict approaches to intra-household allocation of resources will contribute to the micro-economic analysis of development in Sudan by reviewing the theories of Amartya Sen (1987, 1990), Pollak (1994) and Jane Guyer (1987, 1988). Such analysis will help in incorporating questions of resource control and economic, social and political empowerment.

Vulnerability, coping and diversification models will help in determining whether vulnerable female entrepreneurs in Sudan are empowered enough to make their own decisions on economic activities they undertake, on social relationships and on the management of their assets.

Women's empowerment paradigms and the participatory planning framework developed by Linda Mayoux (September, 2005) will guide the research framework for assessing the SWGU role in reducing poverty, promoting gender equity within the household and entrepreneurs' empowerment.

2.2 Models of the entrepreneur

The economic development literature related to the concept of the entrepreneur is, to a large extent, directed by the contribution of the development economist J.A. Schumpeter, who established the Theory of Entrepreneurship. The key concept of Schumpeter's theory contributes to the theory of economic development and the analysis of the economy as being cyclical in which a new equilibrium can be reached through the dynamic individual called entrepreneur who can 'educate the customers and teach them to want new things' (Schumpeter quoted in Van der Wees & Romijn 1987: 74-94). According to Schumpeter this will be done through innovation in the form of different combinations such as the introduction of new goods, opening up a new market, the conquest of new supply of raw material and carrying out the new organisation of any industry. To Schumpeter (1934: 74-94), 'the creation of these new combinations is a unique achievement which only dynamic entrepreneurs are able to exercise the function of searching of new market opportunities' (Schumpeter, quoted in Streissler 1981: 60-83).

Schumpeter (1934: 74-94), acknowledges that capital and financial resources are very important elements in business formation and emphasizes the potential change in economy over the current structure that are caused by the entrepreneur who is able to change the business form. Schumpeter lists these changes as 'product innovation, major differentiations in product quality, process innovation in production or selling techniques, opening up new input markets and sources at home and abroad, changes in market and or firm organization, as in cartelization, promotion of mergers, and formation of trusts' (Schumpeter quoted in Streissler 1981: 60-83).

McClelland (1961:128-156) explained that the entrepreneur is motivated to carry out his/her business and works relentlessly, which reflects a strong desire for recognition. He goes further in describing these motivations to include the dreams and wishes to found a private kingdom; the sensation of power; leadership and authority, social distinction; the will to conquer and the impulse to fight. Only later, in the context of discussing the surplus, does he state that the entrepreneur's motivation behind carrying out the business is to attain profit. A successful implementation of new combinations promises the entrepreneur promoters' profits''. McClelland added that the entrepreneur is motivated often by a high need for profit maximization after basic needs are met.

McClelland (1961:128–156) characterised the entrepreneur as a rational risk taker that has the ability to evaluate the situation on the basis of a calculated risk for future profit maximisation and then decide on a new product or combination of production techniques. In addition the entrepreneur has the ability to measure his/her success and achievement through increased profit, where risk-taking is an integral part of profit maximisation.

From what has been explained above, economic theories indicate that the entrepreneurs' motivation for profit maximisation has led to the development of highly efficient businesses. Nafizinger (1986:9) indicated that in Harvey Leibenstein's -efficiency theory the entrepreneurs' desire in carrying out new economic combinations is to achieve the highest economic efficiency of their enterprises. The economic model of Harvey Leibenstein characterises the entrepreneurs in terms of their ability to make up for market deficiencies by searching for and managing the highest level of efficiency of the firm through new economic information; using different factors of production inputs and outputs and hence connecting different markets; utilizing their capacity to innovate in order to achieve economic efficiency; and expanding their firms as sources of information and expertise.

The traits listed by economic scholars, mentioned above, indicate that the entrepreneurs are able to make their own decisions on selecting an enterprise. There are other essential traits that are not acknowledged, such as the ability to grasp a suitable opportunity and act or seize up opportunities for obtaining assets such as financing, equipment, land, workplace or assistance. In addition to that, the entrepreneur's ability to express independence in his/her activities is a very important element in terms of empowerment. Not least is the ability to maintain optimum satisfaction with the present working conditions.

The entrepreneur is driven to do something new and better for increased profits. His/Her role in the economy is to manage scarce resources efficiently, and use his/her entrepreneurial traits to achieve economic growth through innovation in her business and at a personal level.

Reflecting on the above mentioned theory it may be argued whether talented entrepreneurs can achieve their objectives if we consider the social system in terms of the family and wider society in which they work within a social institution starting from the household which is viewed as one unit and governs by institutionalised structural values, and cultural norms

which affect the entrepreneurs' economic performance, choice, action and behaviour. Schumpeter's theoretical framework assists in identifying the significant role that the entrepreneurs play in their enterprises' success but not sufficient enough to have a complete analysis of the impact of the firm on poverty alleviation and women's empowerment.

The contribution of this model of entrepreneurs to the study will guide the researcher to formulate the following types of questions related to the entrepreneur and her business such as:

- What kinds of enterprises are selected by female entrepreneurs
- What are the purposes for initiating the business
- How do female entrepreneurs manage their businesses
- How do they maximize, expand their enterprises' profits
- How do they use these profits

To enrich the analysis this study will also incorporate other theoretical frameworks of neoclassical economic theory developed by economists and feminist scholars, whose contributions in the analysis of the household tackles other economic and social development dimensions related to the ability of the female entrepreneurs to make their own decisions and control their own enterprises.

2. Household micro-economics models

From the literature review it is found that scholars from different disciplines, in particular economists, anthropologists and the feminists have their own views about the definition and concepts of the household, the household structure, intra-household bargaining and decision making and the household's external relationships that influence the entrepreneurs' performance. Within this part of household micro-economic theoretical framework, scholars' views will be organized as a consistent body of analysis, which will start with the definition of the household. The anthropologists are pioneers in defining the household as a one family, marriage and kinship unit characterized by cooperation and sharing relationships in carrying out collective household consumption, production and investment activities as well as resource ownership.

2. . Intra-household concept and structure

Economists are reluctant to define the family but try to develop various economic models of household behaviour. Chen & Dunn (1996:12) view it in terms of household decision-making related to consumption, production, investment and resource ownership. As it is clear from Schumpeter's Theory of Entrepreneurship, economists pay attention to the household by focusing on the individual as a consumer and on the firm as a producer and neglect family relationships, particularly intra-household allocation of resources. However, feminists' anthropologists and economists view the household through the additional lens of conceptual development, that is, from the perspective of gender or socially defined roles and relationships perspective. Chen et al (1996:16) mentioned that feminists have noted that socially-defined differences such as age, marital status, seniority, ethnicity as well as gender relations within the household play an important role not only in conflict creation but also in alternative arrangements of resources, income, time and power within the household.

Moore mentioned that prominent feminists conceptualized the household as the site of women's oppression and as the locus of conflicts of interest between women and men and the result is the emergence of a view of the household which sees it as a locus of competing interests, rights, obligations and resources, where household members are often involved in bargaining, negotiation and possibly even conflict (Moore1994:87). Also within the households the bargaining power of individual members is shaped by the cultural, economic and political factors in the surrounding society (Moore 1994:87). It is clear that the household concept has been developed and altered from the sharing and cooperation concepts of household developed by anthropologists to incorporate the possibility of negotiation, bargaining and conflict within the family. This indicates a shift from the analysis of the household as a bounded unit towards a view which stresses its permeability (Moore 1994: 86). The household is not only viewed as a source of economic conflict and inequality within the household but also encompasses cultural constructions of gender differences in the allocation of time, resources, and power within the household. This shift is very important with regard to culture and its influence on women's status. Culture is described as 'an integrated system of beliefs..., of values..., of customs..., and of institutions which express those beliefs, values and customs..., which bind a society together and give it a sense of identity, dignity, security, and continuity' (World Bank Report quoted in Abecassis 1990:1). This cultural system of beliefs, values and customs plays an important role in shaping the

position of women within the household. There are misconceptions about Islam and the culture that influences gender relationships. In this respect Muhammad mentioned that Culture is far too complex to be interpreted, or evaluated by any one of its components. Knowing that what people actually practice in so-called Muslim communities is in reality a form of popular religion that comprises elements deeply rooted in culture then researchers should consider the particularity of a given culture that might shape and govern gender relationship (Muhammad 2002:1). Muslim Women in early Muslim history enjoyed their social freedom and practiced their rights within the framework of Islam. Women of the family of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) such as Khadijah (peace be upon her), the wife of Prophet Muhammad and the first convert to Islam, was a business woman in long distance trade. The Prophet Muhammad himself worked for her. According to Islamic doctrine 'Woman was not created in order to remain within the household's sphere, never to emerge. Woman's involvement in work outside the home is not restricted to what is directly necessary for household management, childbearing, cooking, kneading bread, and other occupations of the same sort' (Margot Badran, quoted in Muhammad 2002:3).

2. .2 Intra-household bargaining and decision making

The internal structure, dynamics and divisions within the household is another area that needs to be analysed in this research framework based on the literature and studies carried out by Guyer (1988:160-161) who conceptualized the household in terms of household divisions. In this concern Guyer (1988:160-161) notes that male and female, commodity and non commodity sectors have interrelated in different ways over the past century (Guyer1988:160-161). The non commodity sector has always been both a source of accumulation and a buffer for fluctuations in the commodity economy. Family forms of insurance and support, which often depend crucially on female resources, have been counted on to pick up some of the costs of economic changes. Women have shifted their activities into the market in response to changing constraints and possibilities. In the process both men and women have redefined their rights and obligations toward one another and their wider social networks. When it comes to tracing the implications of patterns of household's income and expenditure, production and welfare can not be understood without considering the shifting interrelationship of gender-specific decisions.

Concerning the household decision-making models that have been developed by many neoclassical microeconomic theorists, view the household as a single unit of production decision-making or as a single unit of consumption decision making. This has changed the view of the household as an integrated unit of both consumption and production decision making.

The theory of neoclassical production is based on the firm or the business as the unit of analysis, similar to the Entrepreneur Theory of Schumpeter (1934: 74-94) as discussed above. The business seeks to maximize its profits by selecting the optimal levels and combinations of inputs and outputs. It provides a framework for understanding how the household should allocate its resources to different economic activities in order to maximize its profits. The theory of neoclassical production also indicates that there are seven principles underlying the production theory which assist in understanding the production and profit related aspects of micro enterprise at the household level. According to Ellis (1988: 41-42) these principles include: variable versus fixed resources; diminishing marginal returns; substitution between inputs; enterprise choice; the most limiting, or constraining, resource; opportunity cost; and comparative advantage. It may be argued that taking the business as a unit of analysis with these underlying principles of production and profit, will provide a benchmark for understanding the entrepreneur's ability for profit maximizing and allow for further prediction of how the entrepreneurs might react to changes in prices or technology.

In order to understand the role of micro-enterprises in household economic decision making at the household level, the researcher felt it necessary to incorporate ideas from both the production and consumption theory.

2. .2. Production and consumption theory and decision making model

A.V. Chayanov, a Russian agricultural economist, devoted considerable efforts to integrate the concept of the household as producer and consumer. In the Chayanovian theory of utility model of decision-making, the objective of household's decision maker is to maximize its utility, or level of satisfaction, by consuming the optimal combination of goods and leisure, where utility or satisfaction, is derived from the consumption of goods produced on the farm, purchased goods, and leisure. By combining utility maximization from consumption theory with the production function from production theory, the Chayanovian model provides a

foundation for the integrated models of household decision making. Chen et al mentioned that 'the conclusions of the Chayanov model are linked to key assumptions regarding the interaction between the household and markets most notable among these assumptions are that the household lacks access to a wage labour market and that the household has unlimited access to land' (Thorner, Kerblay & Smith, quoted in Chen et al 1996: 23).

Following the same track as the A.V. Chayanovian decision making model, Becker developed the new home economics by refining the neoclassical consumption model and provided the basic foundation for the 'new household economics' or household production model. According to Barnum and Squire (1979:79-102) in the new household economics the household behaviour was motivated to acquire a set of so-called home or 'Z-goods', including leisure. These Z-goods, and thus utility, were produced within the household making use of purchased goods and labour. These neo-classical models aimed to explain individual household behaviour itself and not like other peasant models that explain individual behaviour, resources and technology possibilities. The "new home economics" model of decision making provides an alternative model of time allocation within the household. In this model the utility or satisfaction of the household is based on home produced commodities in which household members combine their time and labour with purchased goods and services to create these home produced commodities. The model also deals with the concept of Z-goods which include goods for home consumption only, such as meals prepared at home, where the purchased groceries, fuel, and kitchen equipment are combined with the time and skill of the family member cooking the meals. The household gains income in this model solely through wage work. In general, most items purchased by the household must be combined with household labour in order to contribute to utility levels. In this model of the home produced commodities, the values of wage work, home production, and leisure are all assigned an opportunity cost equal to the market wage rate.

2. .2.2 Cooperative conflict and bargaining model

Other than the economic conflict and bargaining power within the household as indicated before in the integrated production model of decision-making the feminist scholars have added other social dimensions to the intra-household models of decision-making analysis. Their contribution is based on their feminist definition of the household in terms of gender and socially defined roles and relationship as indicated before. However, they have argued

that the bargaining power of individuals cannot be defined purely with reference to individual assets. Sen (1987:131) argued that bargaining power is partly determined by the perceived economic contribution of individuals (by others) and the perceived self-interest and self-worth (of individuals themselves). Amartya Sen's gender and cooperative conflict model 1987 builds on the concept and model of bargaining problems, as first developed by Nash's model of bargaining problems which later became central in the Game Theory. Nash's model focused exclusively on individual interests and assumed that individuals have clear perceptions of their interest. Furthermore, Nash's assumptions were highly, if not extremely, idealized. In clarifying these assumptions, Nash writes: 'In general terms we idealize the bargaining problem by assuming that the two individuals are highly rational, that each can accurately compare his desires for various things, that they are equal in bargaining skill, and that each has full knowledge of the tastes and preferences of the other' (Nash, quoted in Turocy 2001: 12-39). Typically, household economic models have exclusive focus on individual interests without recognizing the structural aspects of social relations and the different conditions facing men and women.

The bargaining problem model expanded further in discussing the conflicts that might be involved in decisions regarding household arrangements, of who does what and who gets which benefits, but the nature of the family organisation form requires that these conflicts be shaped within the general frame of cooperation, in which conflicts are treated as deviant behaviour. Nevertheless, the bargaining problem model has an advantage for understanding households accurately because it captures both the conflicts and the cooperation in households which is crucial when analysing intra-household allocation of resources. As the bargaining problem model describes: Cooperative arrangements will make household members function better than non-cooperation. The bargaining problem between two household members arises when more than one possible cooperative solution exists and when each of these solutions are better for both household members than non-cooperation. There are many cooperative solutions that are better than non-cooperation, but, they are not equally good for both household members. Among the possible cooperative outcomes, some are more favourable to each household member than others; one person's gain is another person's loss; hence the underlying conflict between those cooperating.

Sen (1990:123-146) in his co-operative conflicts model suggests that household members cooperate with each other despite their conflicting interests as they benefit more from the

outcome of co-operation than non-co-operation. The outcome will depend upon the relative bargaining powers of the household members. According to Sen (1987), adopting the cooperation and conflict bargaining problem model makes the analysis and understanding of household arrangements more valuable: It is this mixture of cooperation and conflicting aspects in the bargaining problem that makes the analysis of that problem potentially valuable in understanding household arrangements, which also involve a mixture of this kind (Sen 1987:132). The co-operative conflicts' model extended the bargaining problem model by adding the structural dimension of gender relationships for analysing the cooperative conflicts that take place within the household between men and women. The co-operative conflicts' model demonstrates whether or not women's access to education, loans, participation in NGO programmes, and involvement in income generating activities will empower them to improve their position, especially relative to men within the household. This depends on the nature of the intra-household decision-making process. The model also proposes that when women can improve their position and perceived self-interests, and contribute to the household economy; the nature of intra-household relations between men and women can change, allowing women's increased participation in the decision-making process. The coexistence of congruent and conflicting elements even in the choice between different cooperative solutions is central in understanding the reproduction of inequality. This is so because, the value system that leads to implicitly cooperative behaviour within a group may well be directed towards a particularly unequal solution in the choice between different cooperative outcomes (Sen 1989:66). An unequal solution may very well be a superior option to fully individualistic behaviours for all parties. But still, one group may systematically benefit less from cooperation than another. This is obviously valid for intra-family inequality and gender bias.

In regard to the perceived contribution or value of individual household members, one can argue that there are forms of valuation other than economic contribution such as social or religious valuation (position, age, relationship as relatives etc). Sen (1985:7) accepted the fact that differences in perceptions of individual interests and of legitimacy of existing household arrangements is necessary to understand the existence of inequalities. The model explains that there is an advantage in distinguishing between the objective aspects of a person's interests and that person's perceptions of self-interest. By analysing a person's well-being in terms of his or her capability of achieving a valuable functioning, it is possible to better understand existing inequalities within the household. A functioning is an achievement of a person: what he or she manages to do or be Sen (1985:7). The objective aspects of functioning, i.e. a

person's doings or being, include such basic things as being well nourished, while the subjective, psychological and cultural, aspects include such things as being able to appear in public without shame. The valuation of this functioning corresponds directly to a person's perception of self-interest. The choice among cooperative solutions may be distinctly unfavourable to a group – women, for example – in terms of objective criteria of functional achievements, without there being any perceived sense of 'exploitation', given the nature of perceptions of self-interest and conceptions of what is legitimate and what is not (Sen 1989:68).

Sen (1987: 68) classified the results departures from this model of bargaining problem into the following: First, how do differences in the breakdown position influence the respective party's bargaining powers. If a woman's fate is to be disowned by her community in case of a divorce, where such a thing as a divorce is at all thinkable, then the severity of the situation she would find herself in, strongly weakens her ability to secure a favourable 'collusive' outcome. The breakdown position is of direct relevance to the choice of collusive outcome. It affects the respective bargaining powers of the two people since they relate the option of a breakdown to an option of cooperation. Secondly, perceptions of interests may cause a person to get a less favourable collusive solution if he or she attaches less value to personal well being than to the well being of others in the household. Thirdly, perceptions regarding who contributes what and how much, and the corresponding legitimacy to a bigger share of the fruits of cooperation influences the collusive solution to be more favourable to the person perceived to contribute more.

Sen (1987:68) directs the attention to the issues of legitimacy through an extension of the entitlement approach. However the entitlement approach is essentially a legal concept and as such it needs to be extended to the allocation of resources within the household. His concept of extended entitlements makes it possible to link the intra-household allocation of resources and the process of decision-making within the household with questions of legitimacy. Since legitimacy is linked to the prevailing institutional setting, such a framework can help to understand how household arrangements may be structured unequally, and how that structuring actually takes place. In a private ownership economy the entitlement set of a person is defined by his/her endowment original bundle of ownership. Under community ownership these endowments would include the rights of access and extraction open to him or her.

The literature on the micro-economic analysis of intra-household decision making has been widened to include the differences in preference and opportunity with the existence of conflicts and unequal power relationships between the male and female within the household. Pollak (1994:40-48) provides a theoretical framework for analyzing the observed differences between men and women in time allocation; expenditure patterns; access to resources and enterprise choice. Developing this intra-household decision making model indicates that the intra-household models depart from the household models' assumptions of joint household utility functions and replace them with conflict, bargaining, and unequal power relationships between the husband and wife in terms of resource control. This departure gives space to social norms and external conditions that influence intra-household interactions that can be explicitly incorporated into these models of household decision making. This economic model of household decision making has been organized into two groups according to assumptions about whether income earned by male and female is pooled or separate (non-pooled household budget). These models of pooled or separate income are referred to as household bargaining models since differences between the husband and wife are reconciled through cooperative or non cooperative bargaining. The first group of intra-household decision making models assumes separate utility functions of men and separate utility functions of women but pooled earned income. Lundberg and Pollak (1993: 988-1010) points out that the pooled income intra-household models replace the joint utility function with separate utility functions for the male and female. In this model of pooled income there is a single budget constraint in the model and the household bargains to allocate expenditures from this pooled budget. In this model each spouse attempts to maximize his or her satisfaction and utility function by choosing the best combination of purchased goods, Z-goods, and the allocation of labour between wage earning and Z-good production.

The second group of intra-household decision making models assumes separate satisfaction and utility functions for men and separate satisfaction and utility functions for women with separate budgets. In these non pooled income models, the satisfaction and utilities of the husband and wife are linked through income transfers and the joint consumption of Z-goods. The non pooled income models maintain the assumption of separate satisfaction and utility functions for each spouse while adding to it an assumption that the husband and wife have separate (non-pooled) budgets.

Pollak (1994:40-48) discussed the basic assumption behind the household bargaining models between men and women who will only continue to participate in the marital arrangement so long as their utilities within the arrangement exceed the utility levels they could obtain outside the arrangement. The level of utility that an individual could gain outside the marital arrangement represents his or her fall back position. The model also defines the fallback position as a kind of stalemate in which the husband and wife cease to cooperate and there is a drop in the provision of Z-goods.

Rae, Cathy, Irene and Michael (1993: 988-1010) explained that the fallback position is generally assumed to be the utility that each spouse could obtain after divorce or separation. In this regard the researcher can argue that the household pooled and non-pooled bargaining models in this study will provide a formal framework for incorporating the role and consequences of power into economic models of household decision making. In addition it will assist in ascertaining that differences in the bargaining power of the marriage partners are associated with differences in their fall back positions. This model of decision making will assist in enquiring to what extent the fall back positions of women depend upon economic and non-economic factors. The model will help the study determine what opportunities exist outside of marriage that can be held by the individual marriage partners. It will also assist in determining the extent to which the SWGU micro-enterprise services alter one or both partners' fall back positions, thus changing the partners' relative bargaining power. Other dimensions to be explored in this study, with the aid of bargaining models, include how far the female entrepreneur is empowered to function and make decisions about income, expenditures, production and investment, and to what extent are the household expenditure patterns affected by the female entrepreneur who earns the income. Is the female entrepreneur's earned income pooled or non-pooled as part of the household budget and how does the female entrepreneur spend her income.

Literature on the feminist's perspective on internal structure and the dynamics of internal divisions within the household indicate that the household is also viewed as a system of resource allocation. In other words the household is not a unified grouping of people who share and have equal access to resources and benefits from production. This means that the household economy often depends not only on a number of activities carried out by different members of the household, but also on multiple alliances within and beyond the households.

Household decisions and behaviour are affected by the interplay of the different roles and relationships of individual members at different levels of social organization.

Moore (1994:87) explained that the bargaining approach to intra-household dynamics provides an excellent framework for an analysis of the bargaining space. The space open for bargaining and negotiation between household members cannot be purely defined on the basis of individual assets but must also take into consideration the socially and historically specific views about the rights, responsibilities and needs of particular individuals. This prominent model of decision making has been developed for questioning the power and the ideology that present the entrepreneurs as having separate preferences; interests; and resources which in turn give rise to separate decisions and actions. This concept of the bargaining power within the households in terms of interest in resources allocation and household's expenditure and decision making, whether it is separate or joint, is another concept that will be considered by the author in this research framework.

In making separate or joint decisions, Moore (1994:87) indicated that individual household members are often involved in bargaining, negotiation, and possibly even conflict. The household should not be viewed in terms of economic conflict and inequality only, but should also be viewed in terms of the cultural construction of gender differences in the relationships between male and female within the household. It is important to recognize that the outcome of bargaining and negotiation, whether between household members or entrepreneurs, is a question of relative power and the focus on ideology is a response to the recognition that the bargaining power of individuals cannot be defined simply with reference to economic factors, such as access to resources but also to ideology and other social factors. Bargaining power is significantly affected by socially defined differences between individuals and there should be calls for political economic analysis of structures of inequality within the household: more specifically, for analysis of structural factors that place women and children in different social and economic (rather than merely biological) positions from adult men (Folbre 1988: 256-257).

2. . Intra-household and external social relationship

External social relationship is another theoretical model which will be considered in this study. Analysing the external linkages or external relationships between the entrepreneur within the

household in terms of gender relations and the external linkages with the social system will assist in determining the female entrepreneur's empowerment. The social system has been defined in terms of its composition which includes: 'a set of social institutions, each represented by a complicated system of rights, duties, sanctions, and consequences'. The household has been conceptualised in terms of external linkages which emphasise that lower-level units are not, in fact, entirely enclosed within the larger unit; they are linked to external units as well' (Guyer Jane, quoted in Chen & Dunn, 1996:6).

One can argue whether female entrepreneurs are empowered enough when being engaged simultaneously in market and non market relationships when joining savings and microcredit projects. One question that arises is the ability of the female entrepreneurs to interact effectively in public sphere and their mobility and visibility when shifting their economic activities from household to market production and involved in savings and microcredit projects.

Guyer (1988:160-161) also discussed the internal structure and dynamics within the household and conceptualised the household in terms of household divisions, mentioning that male and female commodity and non commodity sectors have interrelated in different ways over the past century. The non commodity sector has always been both a source of accumulation and a buffer for fluctuations in the commodity economy. Family forms of insurance and support, which often depend crucially on female resources, have been counted on to pick up some of the costs of economic changes. The household can be described in three major forms: first, division in modes of production between commodity and non commodity sectors, that is between what the entrepreneurs produce for the market and what they produce for household consumption. Second, the cross cutting division between female entrepreneurs and the other male members of the household, in particular between male and female who are involved in separate and joint economic activities and move in and out of the commodity and non commodity sectors to varying degrees. These divisions between commodity and non-commodity and male and female division of labour interact in different ways to help generate income and smooth household consumption. Finally, the integration of seniority, age and marital status also cross cut and divide the household.

In applying bargaining and negotiation models for household analysis it enables the researcher to incorporate questions of empowerment and change in the intra-household

relationships due to microcredit projects such as: who makes the decision in the allocations of economic and financial resources Who owns and controls the flow of income increase of the enterprise What are the impacts of enterprise ownership within household decision making, ownership and control of financial and economic resources What is the impact of the microcredit projects on the mobility of the female entrepreneurs and the access to financial institutions, marketing and information sources What kind of empowerment takes place related to gaining or lacking decision making and negotiation skills Is empowerment a result of access to credit, financial or other economic factors Are there other social and political aspects that need to be considered in acquiring empowerment

2. Vulnerability, coping and diversification models

There is a huge range of literature from various scholars attempting to define the term vulnerability and poverty. The term vulnerability has been used in a variety of related but different meanings. In defining vulnerability, Chambers mentioned that one of the most well-known definitions for vulnerability refers to exposure to contingencies and stress, defencelessness, and lack of means to cope without damaging loss (Chambers 1989:1). Chambers (1989:1-7) assisted in the understanding of the semantics of vulnerability when he argued that it often means defencelessness, insecurity, and exposure to risk, shock and stress. The capabilities and entitlements approach helps to identify the people and the communities that are most vulnerable by focusing attention on exchange and trade relationships and the factors influencing the operation of these relationships. Based on Chambers' definition of vulnerability, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Report (1998:1) stipulated that poverty in Sudan has been defined, especially from the vantage point of eradication, in terms of the generation of a low level of human welfare, best understood as a failure of human capability. In this perspective, poverty is almost synonymous to powerlessness. Powerlessness manifests itself in a lower level of satisfaction of basic needs, and, more importantly, in lack of access to, and control over, capital: physical, financial, human and social. This characterisation of poverty helps reveal processes of poverty generation and reproduction and, hence, informs policy formulation for poverty alleviation and eradication. The World Bank Report of 2000/2001(2001) made security a central part of the framework underlying the analysis of poverty. It provided a number of related definitions, including that vulnerability means the likelihood that a shock will result in a decline in well-being (World Bank Report 2001: 139). Also vulnerability has been defined;

We use vulnerability as the existence of a threat of poverty and destitution; the danger that a socially unacceptable level of wellbeing may materialize (Dercon 2004:3).

The last two definitions point out the connection between poverty and vulnerability most suitable for household level poverty analysis and most relevant for the purposes of this research, in which vulnerability is defined as the existence of the threat of poverty and that vulnerability could result in a decline of well-being. Based on these definitions it is argued that the vulnerability approach could be used to measure poverty at a household level. This has been supported by Cheston and Kuhn (2002:8) who said that measuring the extent to which this trend toward the feminization of poverty, is occurring presents many challenges. They referred that to the methods of measuring poverty that assess the level of poverty of the household as a whole. It is likely that poverty experienced by women as a result of discrimination against them within their households is underreported to a great extent. In addition 'Although women are not always poorer than men, because of the weaker basis of their entitlements, they are generally more vulnerable and, once poor, may have fewer options in terms of escape' (Baden and Milward, quoted in Cheston & Kuhn 2002:8).

Swift (1989: 8-15) argued that vulnerability is not simply another word for poverty but the concept of vulnerability deals with conditions of risks facing poor people, uncertainty and the ability of vulnerable people to mitigate these risks. This raise the question whether these concepts of vulnerability will assist in forming a viable theoretical framework to understand vulnerability, assess its impact and make certain that micro-finance institutions can significantly reduce women's vulnerability to poverty. A reduction in women's vulnerability can sometimes also translate into empowerment if greater financial security allows the women to become more assertive in household and community affairs.

Literature based on empirical studies has grown rapidly over the last two decades on risk and coping strategies associated with sources of livelihood, income and food. Literature indicates that the concept of livelihood has gained wide acceptance as a valuable means of understanding the factors that influence people's lives and well-being, particularly those of the poor in the developing world. Livelihood approaches are linked to the poverty concept. There are different definitions of livelihood, but Carney (1998:4) mentioned that a livelihood system comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover

from stresses and shocks and maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets both now and in the future, while not undermining the natural resource base. This approach is relevant to the central enquiry of this research framework, namely the changing patterns of rural opportunity and vulnerability and the social and physical processes strengthening access and therefore well-being. This framework will examine ways of conceptualising such change, particularly in relation to the decision makers' priorities of mitigation of risk and maximization of profit. First, the theoretical framework will consider the nature of exogenous forces that apply stresses to entrepreneurs' livelihood systems by reviewing the micro-economic framework developed for the analysis at the household level. Second, the theoretical framework will discover how other scholars view entrepreneurs' responses and what this means for well-being, poverty and economic mobility.

In this regard Chen & Dunn mentioned that the mix or sequence of strategies adopted by individuals and households is seen to result from both exogenous (or external) factors as well as endogenous (or internal) factors. The most commonly cited 'exogenous factors are the prevailing economic, technological, ecological, and social conditions. The endogenous factors are the composition of the household, especially the worker-dependent ratio, ascribed gender roles and relationships, especially as they relate to coping mechanisms; and the degree of intra-household cooperation between men, women, and children' (Agarwal, quoted in Chen & Dunn 2006:30). Moreover, many studies note that women cooperate from a weaker bargaining position than men and assume a major share of the burden in relation to coping mechanisms. The central point to the studies of vulnerability, coping and diversification adaptable models has been the distinction between natural and human-induced environmental change caused by exogenous forces and endogenous factors. These factors can be classified in two categories of human and natural forces. This former category includes cyclones, floods, drought and other 'acts of Allah' in which the role of human agency is relatively minor. The latter category includes changes in technology, public policy and major market forces. Of course, the distinction between natural and human-induced environmental change is often difficult to see. Contradictions lie between what is true and the perception of what one believes is true. Both human and natural forces can have variable time-frames, and degrees of predictability. They exhibit shocks, trends and cycles. A shock is a relatively short acting stress, such as drought, epidemic, or fall in output prices. Shocks are usually less predictable and more severe. They lead entrepreneurs to adopt various precautionary or insurance strategies. If shocks are more gradual, then they become trends, such as urbanisation,

structural transformation, population growth, resource degradation, the distribution of new technologies, and the development of new markets. Cycles or recurrent risks, particularly those associated with seasonality, are more predictable, such as predictable seasonal fluctuations in income and food security in normal years or lean seasons. Hungry seasons namely, the seasons in the year when large numbers of people typically consume less food than other seasons, are often modulated by trends and shocks (e.g. particularly bad or good rains,). An external stress, or hazard, will not affect every system, or every social actor or economic unit in that system. Agricultural decline, whether through drought or declining terms of trade, is likely to affect most rural people; agriculture is the lynch-pin of many rural economic activities. Other changes are mostly targeted to particular livelihood groups and socio-economic classes.

The empirical literature indicates that risk and uncertainty play an important role and influence the entrepreneur's decision making. When the entrepreneur faces several different types of risks, depending on the household's level of economic security, the risk environment of the household may affect decisions related to micro-enterprises. Studies reveal the way risk is conceptualized and modelled in household economics.

Concepts of risk are implicit in more recent writings on vulnerability that have developed in parallel to the literature on coping and indicate that there are three critical dimensions to periodic risk: the likelihood that it will occur, the exact time when it will occur, and the severity with which it will occur. Of course, the exact timing and severity of periodic crises are not predictable. But when periodic risks are likely but not predictable the entrepreneurs adopt precautionary strategies. In areas where periodic risks are less likely, households can afford to be less precautionary. Modelling risks can be distinguished based in two other key dimensions: temporal risk and spatial risk. The associated temporal risk or crisis, whether it is short-term or prolonged, is a key determinant of the ability of communities and individual households to cope. If a drought continues for several years, even wealthy households often have to resort to various coping strategies. The spatial risk whether it is localized or widespread in terms of geographic areas or social groups affected is a key determinant of the ability of communities to offer social security or insurance to vulnerable households (or individuals) or, conversely, of the ability of vulnerable households (or individuals) to turn to other households for support.

Shipton (1990:353-394) illustrates precautionary coping strategies. The model indicates that against the predictability of recurrent risk and the likelihood of periodic risk, households adopt various precautionary or insurance strategies which typically include: diversification of livelihoods, consolidation (or building up) of stocks and savings, and social investments in reciprocal or redistributive systems among households. The model explains the most important strategy against predictability of the recurrent risk which is the diversification of the livelihood system that takes various forms ranging from scattered fields and diversified crops, seeds strains to animal species. The model puts emphasis on the concept of diversification, a strategy of engaging in multiple activities, as an important way of promoting flexibility and countering risk and uncertainty. According to the model normal recurrent and abnormal periodic risks are most easily weathered by those households which have access to two or more economic activities. The argument that can be raised is the ability of the household to effectively manage these multiple activities and smooth peaks and troughs in consumption during the slack seasons. In a similar vein Davies (1996:15) mentioned that the livelihood system of diversification adopted by the household accounts for variation in the nature and intensity of vulnerability, depending on different ways in which people acquire access to food.

Risk management is often cited in literature as the primary motivation for diversification and it is worth recalling the distinction between ex-ante and ex-post strategies. Bryceson (1996:97–111) points out that diversification works to reduce risk by spreading it across several enterprises and agriculture diversification has long been known as an effective strategy. Bryceson (1996: 97-111) numerated various forms of diversifications such as enterprise diversification (planting different crops or inter-cropping), spatial diversification (planting across different fields), temporal diversification (staggered planting) and varietals diversification (using lower risk, drought resistant varieties). Other forms of diversification include input diversification (using low risk or lower price inputs), market diversification (alternative sources for purchasing inputs and selling outputs) and vertical integration (diversifying into production of inputs and processing of outputs). However, such strategies are only effective if the risk does not vary across the enterprises in question, which in fact often happens in a rural environment. Many branches of the economy are likely to depend indirectly on agriculture and when shocks come, in the form of drought or falling terms of trade; they are likely to affect all farms. A common solution is to diversify into non-local (urban) labour or product markets. While diversification may work to reduce risk, it is not

without cost. In this respect Francis (2000: 7–8) said that diversification may involve the mobilisation of labour, often kin, over sectors and space and this can incur significant costs of supervision and acquisition of information.

Carter and May (1999:1-20) discussed the insurance strategies as another form of ex-ante risk management. They mentioned that formal insurance is rarely available due to the co-variant nature of risk in rural areas, high transaction costs and moral hazard. Credit schemes often substitute for insurance and aid consumption smoothing, and are more widely available, though microcredit schemes can have severe restriction in the use, quantity and timing of funds available. More common and traditional strategies involve investing in assets, stocks and savings such as stocks of livestock and food, jewellery, cash or household durables.

Davies (1993: 60-72) and Swift (1993:1-16) discussed coping strategies in their studies and said that should a shock or stress challenge the basis of a livelihood, then it moves into 'coping' strategies, which are short-term ex-post efforts to support the basis of livelihood while the stress is present. The coping strategies include three potential components which are based around assets, activities and needs or preferences, equivalent to the three main elements of the micro-economic model. 'Coping at preference, need or consumption level typically involves consumption diversification by changing diet or inputs to cheaper or more plentiful items, consumption reduction by rationing, or consumption reduction by reducing the number of consumers (e.g. by loaning livestock or sending family members' (Devereux, quoted in Start & Johnson 2004:30). Swift (1993: 1-16) mentioned that coping at asset level typically involves liquidating stores, eroding productive assets, calling down informal claims (e.g. through kin networks and moral economy) or calling down formal claims (e.g. through the state or financial services). Coping at activity level can involve working harder or longer hours at existing activities or diversifying into new economic activities protected from the original shock or trend.

Literature on microcredit, as a coping strategy, indicates that credit is debt. It's a double-edged sword. On one hand, the ability to borrow money and repay a loan can boost the borrower's sense of pride and self-esteem. Conversely, debt tends to increase vulnerability and the stress of debt or business failure can be devastating. Hulme and Mosley discussed how entrepreneurs adopt some negative responses to risk to repay the debt, There have been, though it is assumed not to be widespread, examples of extreme negative reactions to inability

to repay, including suicide, bankruptcy, seizure of assets, and cases of borrowers informally offered assets as collateral to other group members (Hulme and Mosely 1996:120-122). Coping strategies involve measures which are most, moderately, or least reversible. The kinds of responses and measures adopted influence the entrepreneurs' management of their assets during a crisis period. What kinds of adjustments are adopted by entrepreneurs in work, consumption or social relationships? There are four important dimensions that characterize household coping strategies: 'first there is the type of strategy characterized by whether it involves adjustments in work, consumption, assets, or social relationships. Second, there is the level at which the strategy is negotiated, that is, whether the strategy involves relationships or transactions within the household, between households, at the wider community level, in the marketplace, or with government services, personnel, or policies. Third, there is the degree to which the strategy is reversible: that is, whether and how easily the household can recover after the period of risk or crisis is over. And, finally, the sequencing or timing of household strategies: that is, which households adopt which strategies in what sequence, and why' (Chen, quoted in Chen & Dunn 1996:31). These dimensions are incorporated in the theoretical framework of the study to examine the coping strategies adopted by various entrepreneurs, reflecting the entrepreneurs' empowerment and ability to interact with wider social institutions.

Concerning microcredit and income protection to reduce the vulnerability of the poor some researchers and practitioners have been considering greater flexibility of financial services and view income protection (savings, insurance and other mechanisms to reduce vulnerability) as a priority over income promotion.

Financial services may not significantly alter the more entrenched structural causes of poverty. As MacIsaac points out, 'Programs such as peer-group lending programs, which do not provide financial services necessary for coping (e.g., access to savings, consumption loans, and insurance schemes), are more likely to result in the exclusion of the poor during difficult periods due to peer pressure' (Montgomery, quoted in MacIsaac 1997:20). Montgomery (1996) argued that 'The ideal and ability to provide mutual support are undermined, and the tendency to exclude those facing temporary or sporadic repayment problems is strengthened. In sum, RDP's emphasis on disciplining rather than protecting the poor entails social costs which contradict the broader objectives of solidarity group schemes. (Montgomery 1996:304). This provides ample reason to consider the broader financial needs

of poor women and men. Savings, consumption loans and insurance schemes can play an important role in coping strategies, which can reduce the vulnerability of the poor. At present, most microcredit programs are responding to only a portion of women's and men's financial needs. It is therefore not surprising that microfinance institutions seldom replace all informal sources of credit.

The impact of the microcredit and saving projects on the female entrepreneurs' empowerment might have reliable indicators of social and gender impact measurement, however, the impact of microcredit in reducing poverty is still very low in this regard. The evidence on performance of these schemes in reducing poverty is still fragmentary. Even the better microfinance schemes have had limited impact on the poorest who are often risk averse, and often lack the capability (in education or health) to take advantage of credit for self-employment activities. Sound program design can often enhance an intervention's effect on poverty. But this type of intervention credit seems unlikely to be the main route out of poverty (Yaron 1997:50). And I agree with this and another argument forwarded by Maclsaac that micro-enterprise by itself is not sufficient; it could be a necessary condition, but it is not a sufficient condition for empowerment (Maclsaac1995:7). Micro-enterprise should be directed to empower female entrepreneur to solve the gender inequality and gender relations as it will be treated in point 2.5 on the empowerment models.

These theoretical concepts on vulnerability, copying and diversification models will assist the author in formulating questions related to: what is the kind of risk being anticipated by the female entrepreneurs and the actual risks they encountered What kinds of strategies are used to mitigate these risks What kinds of strategies are used to diversify their income How do they recover from the enterprises' debts How does the enterprise reduce the women's vulnerability

2. Empowerment models

Highlighted here is one of the recent theoretical paradigms of women's empowerment suggested by Linda Mayoux. Mayoux (2005) argued that there is a need for a serious rethink of many currently accepted 'tenets of best practice' in light of existing evidence of gender impact. There is evidence of significant potential for micro-finance to enable women to challenge and change gender inequalities at all levels if there is a strategic gender focus.

There have also been many important recent innovations in products and services to enable women to benefit. Nevertheless, benefits cannot be assumed or even be financially sustainable if they are gender blind, they may even seriously disempower women and increase inequality. There is a need, therefore, to make gender 'best practice' integral to micro-finance design rather than a marginal and marginalised add-on to financial sustainability or poverty reduction. In her empowerment model Mayoux (2005) discussed three contrasting paradigms of 'best practice', each of which has differing understandings of women's empowerment and the aims of microfinance. These empowerment paradigms include the feminist empowerment paradigm, the poverty alleviation paradigm and the financial self-sustainability paradigm.

In the last two paradigms, despite the rhetoric of 'empowerment', gender policy risks 'evaporation' into merely using women's time and resources for programme efficiency or community development. There is little serious attention to change in gender relations. Mayoux gives evidence of gender impact and indicates that although micro-finance programmes do potentially have a significant contribution to women's empowerment, this is not an automatic consequence of women's access to savings and credit or group formation *per se*. In many cases benefits may be marginal and women may even be disempowered.

Mayoux (2005) defines what is meant by empowerment. Economic empowerment occurs when women's access to savings and credit gives them a greater economic role in decision-making about savings and credit. When women control decisions regarding credit and savings, they will optimize their own and the household's welfare. The investment in women's economic activities will improve employment opportunities for women and thus have a 'trickle down and out' effect. The financial sustainability and feminist empowerment paradigms emphasize women's own income generating activities. In the poverty alleviation paradigm, the emphasis is more on increasing incomes at the household level and the use of loans for consumption. In the feminist empowerment paradigm, individual economic empowerment is seen as dependent on social and political empowerment.

Increased well-being occurs when women's access to savings and credit facilities and women's decisions about what is being done with savings and credit strengthens women's say in economic decisions of the household. This enables women to increase expenditure on the well-being of themselves and their children. This is the main concern in the poverty alleviation paradigm. Other welfare interventions are advocated in addition to micro-finance,

typically nutrition, and health and literacy campaigns to further decrease vulnerability and improve women's skills. In the financial self-sustainability and feminist empowerment paradigms, improved well-being is an assumed outcome from increasing women's economic activities and incomes.

Social and political empowerment is a combination of women's increased economic activity and control over income resulting from access to micro-finance with improved women's skills, mobility, and access to knowledge and support networks. The status within the community is also enhanced. The financial self-sustainability paradigm and the poverty alleviation paradigm assume that social and political empowerment will occur without specific interventions to change gender relations at the household, community or macro-levels. By contrast, the feminist empowerment paradigm advocates explicit strategies for supporting women's ability to protect their individual and collective gender interests at the household, community and macro-levels.

The concept of empowerment has been the subject of much intellectual discourse and analysis. For the purposes of this study, the conceptual framework expounded by United Nations in 2001 is a useful starting point. United Nations (2001) mentioned that empowerment is defined as the processes by which women take control and ownership of their lives through expansion of their choices. Thus, it is the process of acquiring the ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability has previously been denied. Kabeer (2001) discussed the core elements of empowerment as agency which include the ability to define one's goals and act upon them; awareness of gendered power structures; and self-esteem and self-confidence.

Empowerment can take place at a hierarchy of different levels, individual, household, community and societal and is facilitated by providing encouraging factors (e.g., exposure to new activities, which can build capacities) and removing inhibiting factors (e.g., lack of resources and skills).

According to Schuler and Hashemi, quoted in Carr, Chen & Jhabvala (1996:214) women's empowerment can be outlined in the following six 'indicators of women's empowerment:

1. Sense of self and vision of a future
2. Mobility and visibility

3. Economic security
4. Status and decision-making power within the household
5. Ability to interact effectively in the public sphere
6. Participation in non-family groups.

In their qualitative and quantitative studies Carr et al (1996:6) mentioned that the process of change in women's status, role and power in society is as important as the actual change in women's empowerment. For example, organizational indicators would go beyond financial viability to cover questions such as: 'Who sets the agenda ' How dependent are groups on the apex body or organization to set the agenda and take action at the community level It was argued that, by definition, people owning and managing their own organization are more empowered than those who are beneficiaries of someone else's organization (Carr et al 1996:6). This organisational dimension of women's empowerment is a key consideration in assessing the impact of the SWGU microcredit and saving projects. One important way to compare different approaches to promoting women's empowerment is to determine who takes the decision as to what domains of women's empowerment to address, in what sequence, and at what pace, rather than simply to compare what domains of women's empowerment are being addressed (Carr et al 1996:214-215).

Mayoux (1997) mentioned that targeting women for microcredit is being increasingly advocated because of evidence of their higher repayment rates. However, evidence suggests that the prioritization of cost efficiency and financial sustainability may dilute the potential contribution of microfinance programmes to women's empowerment. This is particularly the case where there is an implicit (and in some cases explicit) prioritisation of donor interests. In her participatory planning framework, Mayoux (1997) proposed some elements of the ways in which different types and levels of participation in microfinance programmes affect women's empowerment. She said that any proposals at this stage therefore can only be tentative. It is likely that a framework for participation would consist of a number of possible elements as outlined below. She emphasized that establishing an ongoing system of participatory consultation is an important step towards client sustainability, making linkages between microfinance and empowerment, increasing income and control over income and other strategies directly available to the women concerned. Thus, the participatory planning framework should include the following elements:

- Establishing an ongoing system of participatory consultation by involving the different stakeholders with influence over decision making.
- Establishing an institutional framework for participation.

Such an approach would differ from the financial systems approach in taking a multi-dimensional view of empowerment and prioritising the needs of poor women participants and disadvantaged non-participants over those of donors. At the same time it would have to balance and negotiate, where possible, the demands of donors and women clients within the constraints of available donor resources and the need for long term sustainability.

This model of women's empowerment will direct the study to concentrate on the following:

What kind of gender paradigm does the SWGU adopt in their strategy to empower women
And is gender integrated in the credit and saving projects design
What kind of empowerment do female microcredit borrowers achieve by getting access to credit
What economic, social and political indicators of women empowerment needs to be considered in formulating in the study questions
What are the impacts achieved due to the implementation of the SWGU microcredit projects
Are there any changes in female entrepreneurs' status, role and power
How to measure these changes
At what level of participation are female entrepreneurs being consulted
Are female entrepreneurs involved in deciding and planning their own economic activities in a sustainable manner
Is there an established institutional framework for participation

2. Conclusion

The economic model of the entrepreneur acknowledges that innovative female entrepreneurs play an important role for profit maximization and enterprise efficiency to increase household income because they are very dynamic and search for better market opportunities and information, are able to manage their enterprise, and control the enterprise risks.

The neoclassical theory of cooperative-conflict and bargaining models developed by (Sen1987&1990, Pollak Lundberg 1993, Pollak1994 and Guyer1988) that deal with the allocation of economic and financial resources at the household level will assist in the structuring of the study framework and the micro-economic analysis of the entrepreneurs' households. The study framework will focus in the functioning of the female entrepreneurs within the household in terms of their ability to make their own decisions, control their own enterprises and their ability to create external social relationships such as their mobility to do marketing, creating links with the bank and seeking information that assists in the success of their microcredit projects.

Vulnerability, coping and diversification models facilitate how the female entrepreneurs decide and plan their economic activities by incorporating the anticipated risks from deciding and implementing their economic activities, in addition to how to respond to risk.

An empowerment model will assist in identifying the role of SWGU in empowering poor women to challenge gender and change gender inequality through the access to credit at all levels: macro and national level, household level and personal levels. The participatory approaches are used by the SWGU to involve poor women in identifying their enterprises, and plan and implement their projects.

The next chapter will be devoted to the research methodology and the research techniques that will assist in how to execute the research to properly examine and collect the accurate data about the socio-economic situation of poor female entrepreneurs and their poverty conditions as well as on how to assess the impact of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects at the household level. What kinds of data need to be collected The chapter provides information on the sample of the female entrepreneurs to be covered by the questionnaire. It also specifies

the locations of the sample, how to administer the whole process of the data collection and how to analyze the information.

Chapter Three: Research methodology

. Introduction

The research was designed by adopting a combination of secondary data and primary data methods. Secondary data was mainly quantitative statistical data collected from the national surveys, censuses, studies and reports. It was collected to complement the primary data collected from the field studies which include qualitative data collected from the sample of the female entrepreneurs who reflected their opinions, attitudes, perceptions and viewpoints. The participation of the female entrepreneurs in the data collection and analysis of their situation was followed to ensure that the study is more participatory in its approach. This chapter explains how research was undertaken. The chapter ends with constraints related to the methodology followed.

.2 Research techniques

The methodology of the study was divided into two methods of data collection; one is the secondary data collection and the second is the primary data collection.

.2. Secondary data

The secondary data on poverty in Sudan included a review of the reliable information and statistical data from national statistical surveys and the national censuses, mainly the Ministry of Manpower Surveys (MMSs) (1990) and (1996) that cover the northern states only and the latest statistical data of the Safe Motherhood Survey (SMS) 1999 conducted by the Ministry of Health and United Nation Fund for Population (UNFP), which covered the all states in Sudan.

Other sources of information included studies, researches, reports, published topics on journal and other publications about Sudan macro and micro economic strategies and policies.

The sources of these studies, researches and reports were from various international organisations such as UNICEF, World Bank, UNFP, ILO and UNDP with concerned ministries like the Ministry of Manpower and Labour Force, Ministry of Health, Ministry of

Higher Education and Scientific Research, Ministry of National Economy and Ministry of Welfare and Social Development and other academic and research institutions, such as University of Khartoum, Ahfad University, Social Development Institutes, which provides more reliable data that can be trusted. Other studies, researches and reports about Sudan during the periods 1993- 2006 carried out by various ministries, research centres and prominent Sudanese scholars on macro and micro-economic policies, poverty strategy papers had been reviewed.

The main secondary data methodology and sources of data collection included study reports related to the situation of women in Sudan, SWGU microcredit projects studies and reports as well as the annual financial reports prepared by the Bank of Sudan, Credit and Social development Bank, Zakat Chamber, annual reports compiled by the SWGU offices at national and state levels on the microcredit projects during the period 2000 – 2006 on women in Sudan.

In addition the SWGU secondary data included all the reports about the SWGU baseline studies on the microcredit projects, monthly reports of the microcredit projects at the state and grassroots levels. Also it includes SWGU conference papers and strategy papers, SWGU strategic plan of economic activities (1999-2005), minutes of meetings (2000-2006), and reports such as monthly reports, training reports, study report, follow-up and field visit reports and the minutes of the meetings by the economic secretariat: savings and microcredit project at the headquarters, economic secretariat: savings and microcredit project of the SWGU state level and the production centers written by the centre's committees at the local level. Also secondary data included monthly financial reports written by the financing institutions, SWGU monthly reports written by the economic secretariat: savings and microcredit project at the headquarters, economic secretariat: savings and microcredit project of the SWGU at the state level, and production centre's financial records written by the centre's committees at the local level.

.2.2 Primary data

Empirical field research and primary data collection was conducted on a sample of female entrepreneurs who are market-based business entrepreneurs in the informal sector and home-based entrepreneurs who had got access to credit through SWGU microcredit and savings

programmes. And the women who applied and recently received the microcredit and savings loans has been taken to assess the results of the impacts and judge if the impacts and changes are attributed to the microcredit and savings programmes and its contribution to alleviate poverty and empower poor women at their household levels.

To investigate these issues the research relied on both quantitative structured surveys and on qualitative participatory research methodologies, which includes group discussions. Quantitative methods assisted in measuring the outcome of microcredit projects like accounting knowledge, managerial control, cash management, financial sustainability of programmes and the monetary benefits to the borrowers. Depending solely on quantitative data solely could result in neglecting some significant and valued issue of empowerment and may not have led to to clear perspective on the process of women's empowerment. Therefore, the qualitative investigation has taken into account the 'voices,' perceptions, aspirations and strategies of the women borrowers themselves. The qualitative participatory methods were used to reveal the female entrepreneurs' perception of poverty at household level and thus allowed the researcher to examine the trends within the framework of dynamic gender relationships.

. Sample

Based on the SWGU microcredit and saving projects reports (2006) the total number of the beneficiaries of SWGU up to 2005 was equal to 4472 female entrepreneurs covering 14 states. This included 1853 female entrepreneurs who received individual credit with interest (Financed by SudaTel) and 2619 female entrepreneurs who received group credit without interest (Financed by Zakat Social Fund) and who were the beneficiaries of the production centres.

. . Size of the group samples

According to the SWGU and the Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development reports (2000) the sample selection was based on the kinds of credit and the economic activities implemented by the female entrepreneurs. The four groups selected in this regard were from Northern Kordufan State – West of Sudan and Khartoum State - Middle of Sudan.

The number of female entrepreneurs was 300 female entrepreneurs, selected from these four groups, were categorized on the kind of credit and the economic activities. Individual credit with interest covered two groups: Thowra and Tea sellers (represented poor female entrepreneurs) and group credit without interest which offered to female entrepreneurs of the production centres at Khalawi Fetihab and Kazagil production centre (represented very poor female entrepreneurs from female headed households).

Categorizing poor and very poor was based on the results of the Ministry of Manpower Surveys (MMSs) (1990) and (1996) that covers the northern states only and the Safe Motherhood Survey (SMS) 1999 conducted by the Ministry of Health and United Nation Fund for Population (UNFPA) which covered the whole state of Sudan. For more details on the characteristics of being poor and very poor see the analysis in chapter 4, point 4.3: Impact of strategies adopted to alleviate poverty and Table 4.18 attached to the Annex -1: Page 428.

The National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy and SWGU microcredit strategy are based on these statistical data sources. And later the SWGU strategy to implement the microcredit projects was delayed to obtain the results on poverty incidents reported by the Safe Motherhood Survey (SMS) 1999.

Table 3.1 shown below indicates the sample of female entrepreneurs who received individual credit with interest are the Tea sellers (100) and Thowra (100). Total 200. The sample of the female entrepreneurs who received group credit without interest (Gard Hassan) was those from productive centres: Khalawi Fetihab (80) and Kazagil milk production centre (20). Total 100 and the control groups.

Table 3.1

Sample of the study

Category	State	Study group	Control group	Kind of credit	Economic activities
		Number			
Thowra	Khartoum	100	100	With interest – Individual credit	Various home-based activities
Tea sellers	Khartoum	100	100	With interest – Individual credit	Selling tea Market-based activities
Khalawi Fetihab	Khartoum	80	80	With out interest – group credit	Various activities
Milk production centre	Northern Kordufan	20	20	With out interest – group credit	Milk production Market-based activities
Total		300	300		

Source: Own Data collection and Analysis, 2006

. .2 Sample locations

The first sample group consisted of 100 market-based female workers, tea sellers who are located in Khartoum State: Omdurman Province, Ombada Locality at Soak Libya. Khartoum state is the only state where tea seller groups existed and benefited from microcredit projects. The term Libya is joined to the term Soak because the location of the Soak is far away from Omdurman national capital centre and beside the main north western earth road which leads to Libya. Khartoum is the major city in Sudan which is made up of three big towns: Khartoum where all government and administrative offices are located, Khartoum North, the industrial area and Omdurman which was a capital and the main commercial and religious centre of Sudan. All these three towns are located along the rivers Blue and White Nile. Soak Libya is an area which is inhabited by migrants from western and north-western Sudan, who came to the capital during the 1980s because of the drought, desertification and famine that hit the western part of Sudan. Up to about thirty years ago this area was considered to be of no real importance and was classified by the Omdurman local government council administrative as

slum town. Since then it has extended dramatically and grown through a better infrastructure, housing, and small to medium size markets. Soak Libya lies on the road out of Omdurman to the northern part of the country, which is frequently used by trucks, private cars and buses. As a result of this growth the slum town itself has been pushed further away into the desert within an average travelling time from the residential portion to the Soak Libya of thirty minutes by car and approximately two hours walking.

The second study group, Al Thowra consisted of 100 home-based female workers. Al Thowra means revolution in Arabic. Al Thowra entrepreneurs are located in a middle class residential area north of Omdurman. Al Thowra has been developed as a residential area on the fringes north of Omdurman. Al Thowra first developed during the 1960s based on the national plan to allow the original people who live in Omdurman to have enough residential land for their new generations. But most of them refused to leave their old town and sold it to the people coming from outside Khartoum province, especially those from the eastern and western parts of Sudan. Now called Al Thowra Garb Al Harat, the town has been developed into a large area over an approximate area of thirty kilometres to surround the west area of Omdurman. Most of the inhabitants in area are so-called migrant settlers. Al Thowra is inhabited by a cross-section of the community from families including merchants, traders, civil sector and private sector employees and other professionals.

The third study group was Al Fetihab Khalawi group which consisted of 80 market-based female workers. Al Fetihab is a suburb to the south of Omdurman town, officially known as Diem Abu Seed. Popularly, however, it is named after the Al Fetihab tribe, which is numerically dominant and which claims to have conquered the area in the past times. The Fetihab town is located at the western White Nile river bank and is surrounded by Omdurman city to the north, Ombada city to the west and Jabal Awlia to the south. During the 1980s the old Fetihab town was planned and due to expansion of old Omdurman town many Omdurmani residents moved and settled in Al Fetihab. The town is still growing and there are huge extended shanty areas surrounding the town settled by migrants coming from western Sudan due to drought, famine and conflicts. Most of the shanty houses are simple mud structures surrounded by walls. These are nuclear family homes, occupied by husband, wife, unmarried children and in many cases some other relatives. Toilets and taps are sometimes shared with neighbours.

The fourth study group from Kazagil Locality, and consisted of 20 female entrepreneurs from the milk production centre. Kazagil is located in North Kordufan state: Al Obied Province, exactly south-west of Kordufan and adjacent to Al Obied town, capital of north Kordufan. The people are considered to be descendants of the Humr people, who belong to the Bagara Group. Humr people have been affected by urban migration due to drought and unemployment. During the 1960s some of Humr migrated to Khartoum State: Khartoum North province and settled in Hajj Yusuf, a residential extension of Khartoum North, leaving their families at Northern Kordufan. The Kauai Humr Bagara was originally cattle nomads, who moved with their cattle in regular seasonal cycles, according to the availability of grass and water. They usually move south in the winter and north in the rainy season. Cattle are very important to them, in terms of wealth, power and prestige. Cattle also are the main source of food, providing the Humr with dairy products, though they are not usually slaughtered for meat. Sheep and goats are normally eaten. Humr have now begun to settle in Kauai town and other towns in Kordufan states, and have turned to the permanent cultivation of Dura (sorghum) and millet for domestic use. Some have lost their animal wealth due to drought and have adopted cultivation as a full time occupation.

The control group was from the same localities of the study sample of the female entrepreneurs who have newly received their credits: Fetihab Ombada (credit without interest), Thowra (credit with interest), Kazagil milk production centre (credit without interest) and the tea sellers from Ombada locality at Soak Libya (credit with interest).

. . **Criteria for the selection of the sample**

The selection of the female entrepreneurs study sample groups paved the road to select the control group from the same localities, same groups of economic activities and the same kinds of loan they applied to as mentioned for the study sample groups who benefit from the projects as classified before. Also the selection of female entrepreneurs who benefit from the projects and the women who were registered to benefit from the projects was done randomly using the SWGU record reports.

The sample was consisted of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects entrepreneurs groups from Khartoum State: Omdurman province, and Northern Kordufan Sate: Al Obied Province - Capital Locality. I had chosen these states because they were the pilot states for the

SWGU savings and microcredit services, which started in 2000. In addition these two states received a greater microcredit budget than any other states.

The main reason for choosing these four groups was because of variation in the kinds of the credit, economic activities undertaken by each group, the product orientation and the economic status of each group. Al Thowra female entrepreneurs were considered to be from a middle income group, Soak Libya female entrepreneurs were from a low income group and Al Fetihab and Kazagil female entrepreneurs were from a very low income group. Such variation in economic status, especially for Al Fetihab and Kazagil groups, was having a great impact on the type of loan the women received and the economic activities they received.

Also female entrepreneurs from Khartoum represented a more urbanized lifestyle and female entrepreneurs from Kordufan Kazagil represented a more rural lifestyle; such variations affected the economic activities chosen by the female entrepreneurs, especially for the production centre groups in Kordufan and Fetihab. Female entrepreneurs from these centres were similar in some characteristics such as: all attended Khalawi education and studied the Holy Koran and most of them were from a female headed household category and they received the same group credit without paying interest - the loan is called Gard Hassan. Gard in Arabic means loan and Hassan means good or good loan is the loan without interest thus, Gard Hassan means loan without interest.

The selection of the tea sellers was done because tea selling's activity represented the women working in the informal sector and who had been supported by the SWGU for the first time and only applied in Khartoum state. Therefore it becomes important for the researcher to study the first experiences of the inclusion of the informal sector into micro-finance policies and how the SWGU contributes towards the empowerment of this category.

All three categories of female entrepreneurs and their economic activities represented the market-oriented business. While the last group of the sample, Al Thowra female entrepreneurs, represented various economic activities which are home oriented business; in this context it becomes essential for the author to identify how the SWGU microcredit projects affected the economic and physical mobility of the female entrepreneurs when the household economy moves from a home-based to market oriented business, reaching marketing places and other intra-household relations.

Also the selection of Khartoum and Kordufan states was made because the researcher is familiar with these two states and had previous experiences working in these two states.

The control groups also consisted of the same categories as the four groups; same states and same size. The control group included female entrepreneurs who had applied and newly received their credits. The criteria for the selection of the control group were based on the following:

- Own initiative for applying and joining the projects.
- Confidence
- Ability to implement and manage the projects.

. . . **Techniques of the primary data collection**

. . . **Qualitative method: In-depth interview**

More qualitative techniques, such as in-dept individual or group interviews with female entrepreneurs and SWGU savings and microcredit project staff were also employed and provided key information at each stage of the study.

During the data collection the group and individual in-depth interviews provided rich information on women's micro-credit activities, women's previous economic activities and credit experiences, the reasons behind joining the micro-credit activities and the beliefs and practices related to the women mobility, income control, decision makings and ownership.

Qualitative methods were used to:

1. Identify site-specific manifestations of women's empowerment and self confidence.
2. More openly explore aspects of the savings and the microcredit projects.
3. Assess the adequacy of the credit and other management of the microcredit activities, in particular learning session designed by the SWGU and the bank staffs to motivate behavioral changes

In-depth interviews were employed using the guideline checklist related to very sensitive female entrepreneur's empowerment issues. In-depth interviews were executed to collect and analyze data in a participatory manner using certain tools associated with Participatory

Learning and Action (PLA). The group in-depth interviews had been adopted to collect the sensitive qualitative data that related to income, decision making, resources control, motivation etc. These tools included gender analysis tools, wealth ranking tools (used with the key informers: local leaders, Shikh etc), social maps tools, Venn diagrams and cards tools to be filled by the female entrepreneurs with assistance of the SWGU staff to facilitate the learning process of the in-depth interviews.

These individual and group in-depth interviews focused on dimensions of poverty with differentiation between the households. Therefore, the entrepreneur's household as a unit of analysis needed specific methods of qualitative data collection that added value to the SWGU conventional poverty analysis that emphasises using household consumption data only.

To some extent the researcher has been influenced by Kabeer's (1994b:15) observations that participatory research is considered good in terms of gender-awareness of aspects of experience that are normally invisible due to dominant structures of power and the conceptual understandings which go with them. In this respect the concept of vulnerability has more dynamic characteristics than those of poverty. Therefore using risk analysis derived from the social, political, economic and physical environment as well as the capacity. Such a framework of analysis reflected the female entrepreneurs to respond to threats and risks were used. Typically the type of the external risks analysis was described in terms of shock-like drought , and cycle-like seasonality in income, health, and food security. Using such tools of seasonality analysis was very helpful even for SWGU staff to make decisions concerning their future policies.

Executing these methods of in-depth interviews analysis assisted in examining the different kinds of assets and wealth the women owned. These include the analysis of stored assets that could be converted at any time into essential consumption goods through selling, claims assets, which referred to social relationship or obligations which could be called upon from kin or community, and investment assets that assisted to achieve the long-term capacity to be productive and sustain their livelihoods and the reason for this.

The other in-depth interviews looked into the aspect of building women's capacities and empowerment in terms of strength, skills, education, health and social capital. Such a framework of analysis reflected how the household or poor women were capable of dealing

with their problems especially in having a sense of norms, trust, and reciprocity network. In addition the framework of the analysis included the analysis of the material capital to identify how material capital asset ownership and rights can be asserted.

The major areas of the qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews were related to the female entrepreneurs' empowerment as indicated below:

- a) Examine women's perceptions of their empowerment.
- b) Examine women's views on the criteria for empowerment.
- c) Understand how women perceive their situation and what is required to increase their empowerment (e.g. do they have their own income, is there freedom of mobility, equal participation of men and women in decision making etc.)
- d) Examine the female entrepreneur's motivation for starting an informal sector business.
- e) Investigate different kinds of impacts of microcredit loans on female entrepreneurs business operations through:
 - Diversifying products and inventories.
 - Increasing the supply and quality the products offered,
 - Expanding sales.
- f) Identify different kinds of impacts of microcredit loans on female entrepreneur's families.
- g) Identify different kinds of impacts of microcredit loans on female entrepreneur's family:
 - Increase the standard of living of their children in terms of education, nutrition, and health.
 - Changes in women's decision-making abilities and responsibilities within the family.
- h) Identify different kinds of impacts of microcredit loans on women's involvement in the community.
- i) Identify the female entrepreneurs feelings of self-sufficiency and independence:
 - In what aspects of women's lives is there self confidence Where it is lacking
Why

- What are the elements of the situation which, through their presence or absence, encourage or inhibit self-confidence
- Where do women have a sense of being able to act, to cause things to happen
Where are they unable to cause change Why What kind of decision making do they actively participate in
- Is there an increase in the standard of living and wellbeing for women
- Is there a decrease in the occurrence of domestic violence
- How do women perceive themselves In what ways do they limit themselves and their expectations Are they still dependent on their husbands
- Do they have a sense of being worthy of the respect of others or themselves
- Do they relate to a wider context What Where is it limited Why

Adopting such a design of data collection techniques of the qualitative in-depth group and individual interviews using the checklist developed from the questionnaire ensured triangulation of using multiple methods of enquiry, investigations process for verification of data and cross checking, and as sources of information. The purpose of using triangulation was to test the results and get a more complete understanding at the stages of the research in the field, in the preliminary process of analysis and the preparation of the results.

Using the triangulation of data was found to be important and in many cases there were problems detected in the information through this cross-checking. Thus getting accurate impact data was obtained by using a range of indicators, some of which were more sensitive to manipulation than others especially those related to gender issues and intra-household relationships.

. . .2 uantitative method: uestionnaire

In addition of using the guideline check list of group and individual in-depth interviews as mentioned above the author also followed the individual structured interview that looked for the common trend and patterns as clearly indicated in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was break down into four parts: part one includes questions related the household, demographics, personal information about the entrepreneurs and the economic activities. For more details see the questionnaire attached to Annex-2 pages: 453-474. Part two consists of questions related to the performance assessment of the SWGU in implementing the savings

and microcredit projects (Information at HQ level). For more details see the questionnaire attached to Annex-2 pages: 475-478. Part three consists of questions related to the performance assessment of the SWGU in implementing the savings and microcredit projects (information at the level). For more details see the questionnaire attached to Annex-2 pages: 479-481. Part four composes questions related to the microcredit and saving projects. For more details see the questionnaire attached to Annex-2 pages 482-592.

. **Administration of the study**

This field work was carried out by the researcher assisted by SWGU savings and microcredit projects staff of SWGU Local Economic Secretariat at state level. SWGU staffs at local levels who were not formal researchers were included in this research and data collection. This exercise of data collection had a number of benefits, one of which was developing the capacity of the SWGU to contribute to the SWGU policy research and strategic advocacy exercise in future. In addition to that female entrepreneurs of the study sample groups were familiar with the SWGU staff, had a close relationship with them and trusted them. All these administrative actions facilitated the data collection and obtaining good quality data and better analysis during the processes of the individual and group discussions.

The SWGU staff members included the following: three local staff from the SWGU at North Kordufan States: Kazagil Locality, and 20 members of the staff at Khartoum States: Omdurman, Al Thowra and Al Fetihab Localities. The duration of this study was about two months: the field works including five weeks (27 working days) of interviews and group discussion with the female entrepreneurs, and one week of meetings with SWGU and other concerned members of consultative committees and the local staff of the financial institutions (five working days). One week (5 days) meeting with the SWGU staff headquarters and other concerned people. Two weeks (ten days) for collecting related secondary data from the SWGU reports and other documents at the headquarters.

The data collection from the entrepreneurs was carried out with the cooperation of the SWGU Local staff that had been oriented by the author for four days on the questionnaire and its administration. And four days on the basic principles of Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) and the basic tools that will be used with female entrepreneurs (wealth ranking, Venn

diagram, seasonality method of analysis etc.). Also six days for the PLA using the check list with female entrepreneurs: two days at Kazagil and four days at Khartoum.

The questionnaire had been filled out individually with the whole study sample groups of 600 women for more than one week (six days: two days Northern Kordufan- Kazagail centre and five days at Khartoum). And the group in-depth interview technique had been conducted with the female entrepreneurs to collect qualitative data related to gender. Both categories of the female entrepreneurs of the study sample groups, those who benefited from the savings and microcredit projects and the control group who recently got their credit, participated in the data collection. These categories included: tea seller (market-based activities: credit with interest), Khalawi (Fetihab: credit without interest), Thowra (credit with interest for home based activities) and production market centre (Kazagil: group credit/ loan without interest).

More than two weeks (fourteen days) were spent in the orientation of the SWGU staff and the field data collection using the questionnaire. The questionnaire orientation was done within four days: two days for Northern Kordufan and two days for Khartoum. And ten days for the field data collection: two days for Northern Kordufan- Kazagail centre and eight days at Khartoum site.

The maximum number of the interviews conducted by the SWGU local staff with female entrepreneurs was four to six interviews per day. Two days were spent by the SWGU local staff at Kazagil production centre to complete the questionnaire with female entrepreneurs and two days group in-depth interviews with female entrepreneurs of the study sample. Eight days were spent by the SWGU local staff in Khartoum state to complete the questionnaire for both the sample study and the controlled groups: Fetihab, Thowra and tea sellers and four days was spent by the staff in the group discussions

Primary data collected from the female entrepreneurs using participatory data techniques was already analyzed by the female entrepreneurs during the data collection. Questionnaire and other quantitative information obtained from the SWGU reports and studies have been analyzed by the author using statistical packages and presented in tables, diagrams and figures as shown through the different chapters of the study.

• **Constraints**

- All the information of the SWGU microcredit projects documentations was measuring the impact and success of the projects in terms of repayment rates of women involved and did not provide the required data and information about the household dynamics in terms of decision making, control of resources and gender relations that reflects the women's empowerment.
- SWGU lacked the appropriate impact monitoring system and focused only on using weak conventional monitoring system that depends on occasional snapshot visits, minutes of meetings and monthly report coming from the states that lack the information on the monitoring of the indicators related to the impact. This makes the process of looking for relevant and reliable data more tedious, time consuming for arranging and comparing all this scattered information.
- There is a lack of systematic longitudinal data (before, during, end and after the credit) that could assist in providing a picture of how to measure characteristics change over time. This was due to lack of sufficient base-line data for measuring sustainable changes over time.
- To avoid any methodological problems both the control group and the sample group were first selected based on the poverty-targeting system of the local committees: Zakat Social Solidarity Fund committee and the SWGU staff workers at local level. However, bias towards selecting female entrepreneurs without considering the poverty targeting system and selected relatives and friends by both the local committees: Zakat Social Solidarity Fund committee and the SWGU staff workers at local level was anticipated and in many cases was reported. Thus to avoid this problem participatory wealth ranking was applied for the selection of the control group; in addition to that more emphasis was laid on selecting the control group of the female entrepreneurs who have high motivation to benefit from the savings and microcredit projects. Preliminary discussions with female entrepreneurs to identify the levels of their motivations for applying to get credits and to participate in microcredit projects were conducted. Based on that the highly motivated ones were selected.
- A logistical problem was encountered by this study mainly in gathering some of the control group for Al Thowra and the tea sellers microcredit projects due to being registered only, not yet fully involved in the projects and lacking regular contact with

SWGU since their businesses are not yet established. This logistical problem had been avoided by including and concentrating on the new female entrepreneurs who joined the projects and were regularly available to participate in this study. Thus, one can conclude that the study sample used female entrepreneurs at different stages of recruitment. First those who applied for and were at their first stage of receiving the loan and joining the microcredit projects as a control group and female entrepreneurs who are in their later loans as study sample groups. This method again requires good base-line data comparison of existing members with newly joined female entrepreneurs.

- To get good quality of data, the time for the participatory field work with the sample groups' discussions had been extended from two days to three days to correct the poor writing up of discussions and in few cases the failure to use the impact information in their wider work because they were rushing the participatory processes.
- The most important factor in obtaining accurate information for this participatory impact study is the SGWU field workers and the orientation conducted by the author and their role in this study of creating an atmosphere of trust as they had good relations with them played an important factor in the success of the data collection. Thus the two days orientation done with the field workers to make them clear about the objectives of the participatory methodology of the study, selecting the suitable participatory methodologies and understanding gender sensitive questions, arranging the meetings etc was not sufficient. Thus another day was added to get a clear plan of conducting the group discussions. Most female entrepreneurs were very open. The emphasis had been laid on relative values and discussion, rather than just collecting of information. The SWGU field workers in their work created a climate of trust and demonstrated abilities in discussions and this participatory exercise for data collection fits into this. Where the process was not clearly explained or the relationship with the field worker was not good, the information collected was not reliable.

The study was planned and implemented to minimize any expected problems and increase the quality of the data collected through:

- Cooperating with the SWGU staff workers at local level who had a close relation and were trusted by the microcredit female entrepreneurs.

- Getting the commitment from the SWGU staff at all levels

- Previous training of the SWGU field workers in participatory approaches

- Advanced qualifications and experience of the author in using participatory approaches for capacity building and previous research studies.

- Timing of activities to suit the female entrepreneurs and the SWGU staff field worker.

- Minimizing the length of the exercise so as not to be perceived as a burden by female entrepreneurs and the SWGU staff field worker.

- Flexibility of activities of taking place when convenient and not when determined by the author or the SWGU staff field workers.

- Participatory processes with female entrepreneurs are more open and discuss the importance of the correct information

- Situate within a data collection and learning environment for both female entrepreneurs and the SWGU staff field worker analysing their projects and identify the impacts of their projects and how the information could be fed into the methodologies of the microcredit project's cycle.

. **Conclusion**

The methodology of the research was designed by the author incorporating the primary and secondary techniques to facilitate in the collection of reliable information especially at grassroots levels. 600 female entrepreneurs from Khartoum and Kordufan states were selected to enrich data collection and provide analytical information about their poverty situations and the impacts of the microcredit projects. The SWGU staffs were trained in the data collection techniques using questionnaire and participatory approaches techniques for collecting qualitative data and to properly administer the questionnaire, the checklist and other tools. Any problems related to the methodology were solved immediately and in time as illustrated in the chapter.

The next chapter will examine the context of the poverty of women in Sudan to identify the major factors that affect the women's participation in political, social and economic spheres in Sudan in general and Khartoum and Kordufan states in particular that restricts the women from gaining their full rights to work, participate in voting and participate in public and private sectors. The economic strategies adopted to alleviate poverty reduction will be examined in chapter four and five to grasp the full picture of the political and economic feminisation of poverty and gender inequality in Sudan and how the SWGU play a role in this concern to solve women's problems in Sudan.

Chapter Four: Overview of poverty situation among women in Sudan

. Introduction

This chapter shall highlight the poverty situation of women in Sudan by analysing the political, the economic and the cultural factors that perpetuates in both the political and economic spheres of women's life in Sudan. The assumptions behind that the feminisation of poverty emerged during the period of economic Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP) in Sudan as inequality in political and professional representation, failure to take up women's issues to decision makers at the top level and lack of ability to negotiate such issues. There were increased number in homeless children; morbidity and mortality; school dropout and absenteeism and lack of access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Also there were increased inequality in opportunities for employment and discriminatory labour force laws, increasing numbers of female headed households, and few opportunities of women's training and education.

These assumptions have been in consensus with much of the literature on women and development of the late 1990s such as Afshar and Dennis (1992, 1991 & 1992), Beneria and Feldman (1992), Elson (1991), Moghadam (1993 & 1998), Paterson (1995), Sparr (1994), Ward (1990) and March (1999). This literature emphasized gender bias in unemployment, unpaid work, health and education. Also more female household heads due to migration. Hence, when SAPs plans are found to produce persistent inequality for women Tinker (1991), feminist scholars examine the causes of this gender bias and refer it to prevailing neoclassical economic assumptions on the elasticity of women's labour Elson (1991), the inequalities entitlements in resource allocation Sen (1987), lack of investment in human capital of women and girls Senauer (1990), poor women's participation in technological, educational and labour force Bourque and Warren (1990, 1993) and shifts in corporate strategies to reorganise production and gender relations Ward and Pyle (1995) Fernandez-Kelly and Sassen (1995).

Problems in mainstreaming gender principles and institutionalizing gender equity or getting institutions right for women and not just for market efficiency Goetz (1997). Moghadam (1998) asked a critical question: what should be done to attenuate the adverse effects of

crises and adjustment and to enhance women's participation in the changing political economy (Moghadam1998:223).

These arguments will be discussed in details in chapters five and six.

.2 Factors affecting women's vulnerability

This section will assess two factors; the political and the economic factors and the cultural factor that perpetuates in both the political and economic spheres of Sudanese women's life. The political factors deal with rules and regulations as well as with other cultural factors like gender perception that lead to the feminisation of poverty that restricted the women from gaining their full voting rights, participation in election process and their representation in the legislative and executive apparatus. The economic factors deal with the issues related to the laws of labour force, the gender and cultural factors that violate these laws and impact women's participation in public and private sectors and inhibiting the women's opportunity of getting a job, leading to poor working conditions, increased inequality in political and professional representation accompanied with the failure to negotiate and take up women's issues to decision makers at the top level to protect women's rights, in particular female workers in the informal sector.

.2. Political factors

.2. . Historical background

Sudanese women have been involved in nationalist politics from the mid-1940s onwards. Women's awareness of participation in the voting process and other political activities has been strengthened by their education and participation in general labour work. They started the struggle for economic and political independence of the Sudan through the assurance of social welfare, democratic rule and human rights for the citizenry.

The ethics, principles, democratic traditions and solidarity of the voluntary activities towards assisting other women were implanted gradually among pioneering women. Teachers started

raising women's awareness by launching literacy classes to teach women sewing, needlework and handicrafts, home economics and reading and writing. Nurses started teaching women about hygiene, mother and child care, nutrition and the eradication of traditional midwifery practices.

.2. .2 Political rules and regulations

The Sudanese political rules and regulations imposed by various political apparatus have always restricted women from gaining their full rights to participate in politics. According to the former parliament member Nafisa Ahmed Al Amin (2006) the Sudanese Women's Union called for women's political rights and mainly for voting rights in 1953. They gained partial political rights due to three restricted and rigid conditions that caused their political vulnerability. These conditions include that women should be educated and at least have completed secondary school, women should vote from the graduate's constituencies and they should vote only and not elect or be elected. Since the educational status of women was very weak at that time due to cultural reasons restricting women's education, the opportunity for political participation was only open to very few educated women who lived in urban capital cities, Khartoum and Omdurman. So, in 1953 Sudanese women managed to secure the right to vote for the first time, in spite of traditions and social values that governed the political rules which restrict women's involvement in politics. However, the Sudan Millennium Development Goals Report (SMDGs R) (2005) and Human Development Report (HDR) 2007/2008 (2007), indicate that this right was only achieved in 1964 when women received the right to vote, to stand for election and to be elected or appointed to parliament.

.2. . Cultural factors and gender perception

Gaining the right to vote motivated Sudanese women to actively look for ways to sustain that victory and strengthen their status through three mechanisms.

The first mechanism worked through publicising their movement to raise their voices and not by demonstration or opposition because there is a tradition that indicates women's voices should not be loud or heard. Thus in 1955 they simply issued the first magazine called Sawt Al Marra'a (Marra'a in Arabic means women and Sawt in Arabic means voice).

Sawt Al Marra'a emphasises the importance of women speaking out about their issues. In the Sawt Al Marra'a magazine all women's practical and strategic issues were raised, including home economics and nutrition, education, literacy classes, and health, raising women's awareness and addressing critical personal questions such as the right of women to choose whom to marry, early marriage and marriage to close relatives. One consequence of their efforts was the creation of a collaboration with progressive political parties and trade unions that led the Grand Shari'a Judge of Sudan to issue a decree stating that a marriage contract is not legal unless it is proven that the bride has been consulted on the terms of the marriage contract and has given her agreement. In the field of Sharia law educated pioneering women sought to restrict polygamous marriage and abolish Bait al-Ta'a (Bait literally means the house and al-Ta'a means obedience), which was practiced by a court order forcing a woman to live with her husband against her will. The latter was abolished but polygamous marriage practices still exist and create vulnerable situations for women, especially for those who are ignorant about their rights.

The second mechanism included organising themselves and establishing the Jamiat Al Mo'ominat (Jamiat in Arabic means association and Al Mo'ominat in Arabic means Women Believers. According to Nogdallah (1999:51) this association was established in 1961 for the religious and social purposes and its members included some males. Because of their weak position they needed the society's acceptance and appreciation to assist their association. They tried to adopt social solidarity mechanisms by choosing an Islamic name for their association. In addition to that they felt and as mentioned before by Nogdallah (1999:51) that their movement needed some sort of strength, power, safety and security to stand against any sudden destructive wind. Therefore, they opened the membership of the association to include men.

The third mechanism consisted of executing some charity, voluntary and social welfare events to finance political activities for poor women at a grass roots level. In addition to that, they conducted women's political awareness campaigns via voluntary literacy evening classes for women.

In Sudan gender differentiation in political participation needs to be eliminated within the boundary of the Islamic philosophy of gender egalitarianism and gender just (Badran 2006:3), to foster the idea of full equal rights of men and women in private and public sectors. The example in Sudan of male politicians concentrated on gaining more votes to strengthen their party's situation without strengthening the female situation needs to be considered by the SWGU. As has been supported by Nafisa Ahmed Al Amin (2006), who mentioned that the men invited women to join their political parties and opened space for them to be registered as members of their political parties, but not as effective decision makers. Nevertheless, women took power by establishing women's corporations affiliated from male political parties such as Umma Women's Corporation affiliated with the Umma Party, Women's Communist Corporation affiliated with the Communist Party, Women's Islamic Front Committee affiliated with the Islamic Front Party, Southern Women's Committee affiliated with Sudan African National Union (SANO) party and so on.

The intention of the politicians in accepting women's participation in political activities was to gain more votes for their parties, not to raise women's voices inside the parliament. This fact has been supported by Nafisa Ahmed Al Amin (2006), who stated that the intention of the male politicians behind supporting Sudanese women's movement was that women's participation in the parliament is considered a decoration and an issue of filling out the numbers. She added that in 1973, and for the first time, one woman participated in the establishment of the country's first constitution, which opened the chance for women to vote from other provinces and represent their provinces in the parliament (Al Amin 2006). Thus women have the unfettered right to elect and be elected in presidential, federal, state and local elections.

To ensure female participation in political life, there is a quota system guaranteeing female seats and participation in federal and state legislatures. A quarter of all federal parliamentary seats are reserved for women (25 seats). Women are also ensured a minimum of ten seats in all other state legislatures and other elected local bodies. However Al Amin (2006) stated that according to the politicians this quota system is very important at this time, but in practice it is usually adopted to fill the gap in women's representation only, not for strengthening women's position in the parliament Al Amin (2006).

Thus, the main constraint in adopting a quota system for women's representation in Sudan is not the adoption of the quota system itself, but the criteria and measurements used when

selecting the women members of parliament. These methods and criteria should be considered major factors of female vulnerability. For instance, in Sudan, education is one requirement for women to be elected. In most cases, as Nafisa Ahmed Al Amin (2006) discussed education will not guarantee that parliamentary women are empowered enough to pressure male members of the parliament to accept their decisions and some parliamentary women remain weak due to lack of previous appropriate training opportunities in politics from both their affiliated organisations and from the parliament itself. Such training is important to reduce vulnerability and empower women politically. Examples of training offered women during the 1990s and inequality in training opportunities will be explained. Lack of training contributes to the feminisation of poverty, especially during the implementation of political economic policies.

.2. . Gender participation in voting

Fifteen years after gaining the right to vote in 1953 women finally showed some empowerment in participating in the voting process. This can be observed from the voting records of the 1968 election disaggregated by states. The following part of the study is an attempt to analyse the political situation at the state level by comparing the participation of female for first time in voting process during the period 1968 and the last election of 2000 to identify to what extent the situation was improved or vice versa. The link to the feminization of poverty and women's empowerment can be identified by comparing the voting percentages before and during the adoption of the structural adjustment policies through the chapter.

Attention will be paid to the study areas at Khartoum and Northern Kordufan states by highlighting the women's political situation at the local level to identify gender issues and other vulnerability factors that hinder female participation, processes and caused their political poverty situation. See Table 4.1 below:

Table 4.1

Participation of Women in the 1968 Election

Region	Percentage of Female Registered Voters Who Voted	Percentage of Male Registered Voters Who Voted	Percentage in Gender Gap
Khartoum	40	24	16
Blue Nile	31	24	7
Upper Nile	21	12	9
Bahr Al Gazal	28	15	13
Darfur	28	17	11
Kassala	24	7	17
Kordufan	23	16	7
Average	27.8	16.4	11.4

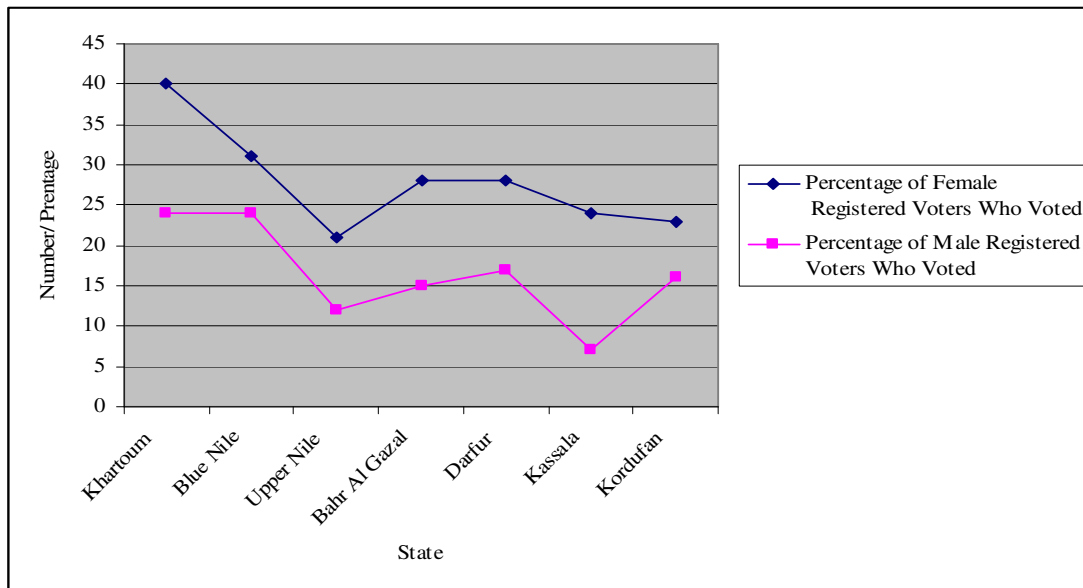
Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Bedri 1983:15).

Table 4.1 above and Diagram 4.1 below indicate that among registered voters there was a greater percentage of women voters than men. Although there was gender gap in the percentage level among voters but in all states the percentage of females participation level was low (highest percentage is 40%) in 1968 election after they won the right to vote. The percentage of registered female voters who did vote was equal to 27.85% on average; higher than male participation at 16.4% on average, with a significant gender gap.

With regard to the study areas, the diagram shows that Khartoum state recorded the highest percentage of women participating at 40%, compared to 24% for male participation. It can be noted there is a significant gender gap for all the states; a greater percentage of female registered voters did vote as compared to males. The low percentage for women's participation was recorded at 21% in Upper Nile and 23% in Kordufan compared to male participation at 12% and 16 % respectively. In terms of gender gap between the two states; Kordufan state showed a narrower gender gap compared to Khartoum state. This indicates that more Kordufani women's representation could have been achieved at the top level.

Diagram 4.1

Participation of Women in 1968 Election



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Bedri 1983:15).

Although at that time the education level for women was very low and women had only recently received the right to vote, they managed to succeed and recorded higher percentages than men in all states in 1968. This is due to the fact Kordufani women do not have restrictions in their physical mobility and their interaction and communication with their male counterparts in market places. Being free from these restrictions assist them to be aware about the political situations and encourage them to participate in political campaigns.

Table 4.2 below illustrates the recent information on women’s participation in the 2000 last election. Analysis will be in the study areas of Khartoum and Kordufan states where the SGWU female microcredit target groups are. The factors causing the feminisation of poverty will be examined.

Table 4.2

Participation of Women in Vote Process for 2000 Election per State

S. No.	Name of the state/ constituency	Registered Female	Female Actual Voters	Female Voters Percentage
1	Khartoum	946116	909578	96
2	N. Darfur	39954	202124	78.8
3	Nahar Al Niel,	203622	151607	74
4	S. Kordufan	59591	5742	9.6
5	White Nile	521926	255484	48.9
6	Northern State	140908	203506	144
7	N. Kordufan	416495	291050	70
8	Gezira	749147	534941	71
9	Kassala	130689	108342	80
10	Gadarif	228578	173531	76
11	W. Kordufan	227699	120913	53
12	Bahar Al Jabal	49542	33329	67
13	Sinnar	125392	111458	88.9
14	Al Dindir	94862	83704	88
15	Sinja	316917	285304	90
16	Warab State	120150	73172	60.9
17	W. Darfur	-	-	62
	Average			74

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2002b:45-54)

Table 4.2 above shows that in all states there is an increased percentage of women's participation in the last election conducted in 2000 than the 1968 election. SWGU documentation (2002b) shows that the Northern state recorded the highest percentage of women's participation in the 2000 election which is equal to at 144%. The percentage of 144% means the number of female voters (203,506) exceeded the number of females registered to vote (140,908), with a difference of 62,598. This result of 144% supports the statements by Al Amin (2006) that male politicians were fighting hard to gain more votes from women to win in their constituencies. Northern State was followed by Khartoum with female participation at 96%.

The lowest women's participation was recorded at 9.6 % in Southern Kordufan state followed by White Nile state at 48.8 % and West Kordufan state at 53%. Two reasons influenced low female participation in the election. First, the conflict and war in North, South and West Kordufan states and the traditional culture in the White Nile state restrict the mobility of females to participate in political activities. Nevertheless, Northern Kordufan, one of our study areas, recorded good results at 70%.

This analysis concludes that when comparing the data from Table 4.1 and Table 4.2 it is clear that women's participation increased on average from 27.85 in the 1968 election to 74 % in the 2000 election. The data also indicate that in Khartoum state women's percentage of participation increased from 24% in 1968 to reach 96% in 2000 and from 16% in 1968 to 70% in 2000 in Northern Kordufan state. During three decades from 1968-2000, the volume of female participation increased by 72% in Khartoum state. In Northern Kordufan state the volume of participation increased by 54%.

Table 4.3 and Diagram 4.2 below analyse gender differences at the local level in our areas of focus, Northern Kordufan and Table 4.4 and Diagram 4.3 Khartoum states, where the SWGU savings and microcredit projects were implemented. By comparing the districts within Northern Kordufan and Khartoum the feminization of poverty will be demonstrated as it is clear from the table there is an increase in women's participation from 23% in 1968 to 70% on average in 2000. In all constituencies of Northern Kordufan female participation for the 2000 election varied; however, every time the number of female votes exceeds the number of male votes. The percentage of female participation in the 2000 election is 70% on average. Actual female voters exceed male voters in which female actual voters recorded to be equal to 62.96% of the total actual voters while male is equal to 37.03% of the total actual voters. This result is very important because the numbers support the evidence that female participation in Kordufan was not affected by the adjustment policies. In both elections of 1968 as a first election and the last election 2000 there is a high percentage of women's participation

Table 4.3

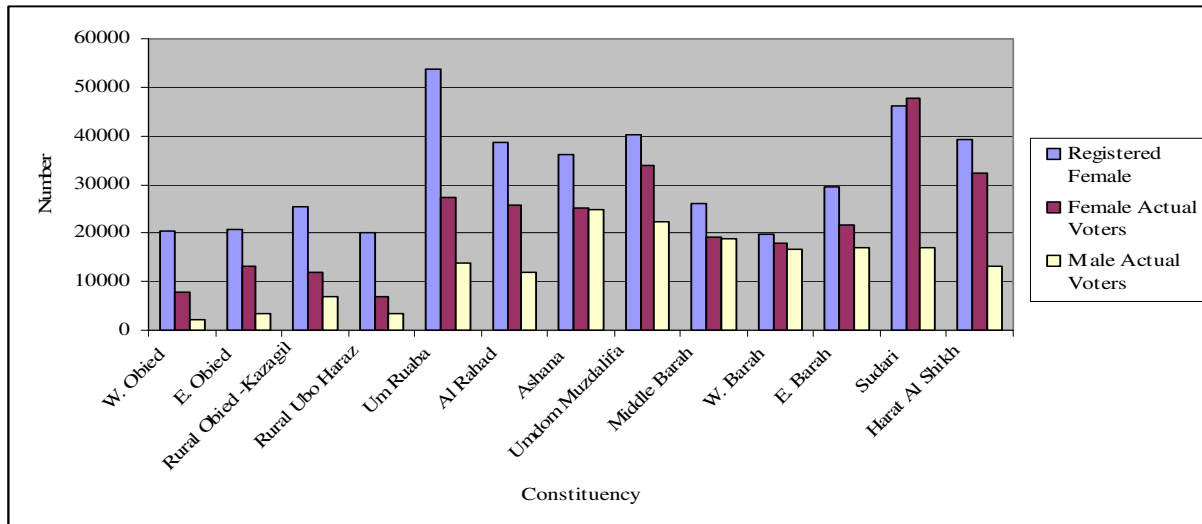
Participation of Women in the 2000 Election - Northern Kordufan State

S. No.	Name of the State/ constituency	Registered Female	Female Actual Voters	Male Actual Voters	Total Voters	Female Voters Percentage
1	W. Obied	20407	7910	2308	10218	38.8
2	E. Obied	20867	13056	3415	16471	62.6
3	Rural Obied -Kazagil	25596	12078	6788	18866	47.2
4	Rural Ubo Haraz	20175	6786	3365	10151	33.6
5	Um Ruaba	53686	27202	13899	41101	76.2
6	Al Rahad	38714	25901	11869	37770	67
7	Ashana	36236	25231	24902	50133	69.6
8	Umdom Muzdalifa	40202	34032	22194	56226	84.3
9	Middle Barah	26076	19132	18927	38059	73.4
10	W. Barah	19649	17900	16604	34504	91.1
11	E. Barah	29509	21734	16922	38656	73.6
12	Sudari	46236	47784	16930	64714	103.3
13	Harat Al Shikh	39142	32304	13100	45404	82.5
	Total / Average	416495	291050	171223	462273	70
	Percentage		62.96	37.03		

Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2002b: 46-47)

Diagram 4.2

Participation of Women in the 2000 Election: Northern Kordufan State



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2002b: 46-47)

The diagram indicates that the highest result was recorded for Sudari constituency at 103.3%. Female voters exceeded the number of females registered. Sudari women represented 73.8 % of the total number of voters in this area while males represented 26.2 %. The next highest result was W. Barah (91.1%) and Umdom Muzdalifa with female voters exceeding male voters. The lowest results were Rural Ubo Haraz (33.6%) then W. Obied (38.8%) and Rural Obied – Kazagil (47.2 %) constituency. In Kazagil the total female registered number was 25,596 females and only 47.2 % (120,780 female voters) managed to vote in the election. Kazagil female voters represent a higher percentage of total voters with a percentage equal to 64 % while males only represent 36 % of the total voters. Across the board, female participation exceeded male participation.

In the Kazagil constituency, records indicate low participation of women and men in the last election. Election records indicate female voters exceed the percentage of the male voters in all Northern Kordufan constituencies whether urban or rural. The higher percentage of female participation is an indication of women's empowerment in political activities. However, when female voters exceed females registered, this shows that the male politicians worked hard to attract female voters to win more votes for their parties. During elections male politicians competed to win the female votes and worked harder to do that than with male voters (Al Amin: 2006).

Table 4.4

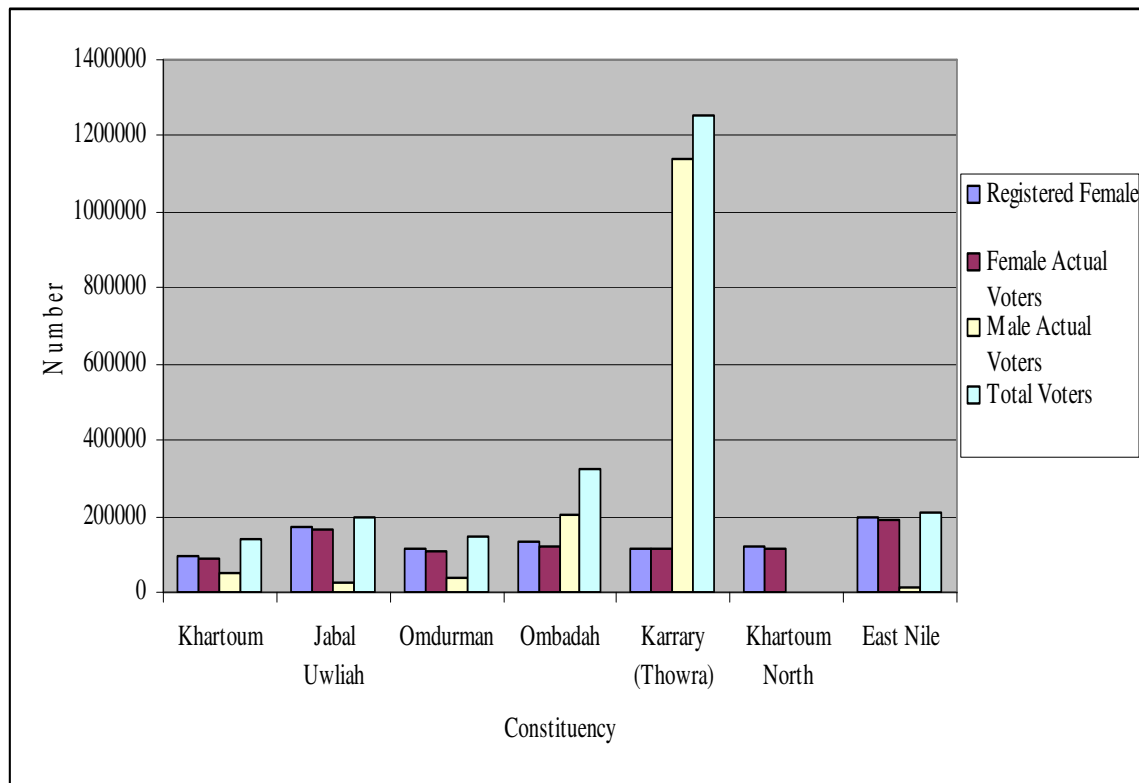
Women's Participation in Vote 2000 Election -Khartoum State

S. No.	Name of the Constituency	Registered Female	Female Actual Voters	Male Actual Voters	Total Voters	Female Voters As Percentage of Registered Voters	Female Voters As Percentage of Total Voters	Male Voters As Percentage of Total Voters
1	Khartoum	94849	88656	50928	139584	93	63.5	36.5
2	Jabal Uwliah	169221	167839	26270	194109	99	86.5	13.5
3	Omdurman	112319	108534	37372	145906	96	74.4	25.6
4	Ombadah	131456	121157	204132	325289	92	37.2	62.8
5	Karray (Thowra)	117612	113740	1142081	1255821	97	9.1	90.9
6	Khartoum North	121947	115663	-	-	95	NA	NA
7	East Nile	198712	193989	13042	207031	97	93.7	6.3
	Total	946116	909578			96		

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2002b:38)

Diagram 4.3

Women's Participation in Vote 2000 Election -Khartoum State



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2002b:38)

Table 4.4 and Diagram 4.3 indicate that in Khartoum state the average percentage of female participation in the 2000 election was estimated to be 96% indicating an increasing trend in participation. As mentioned before, participation in this state was 40% in the 1968 election (see Table 4.1. The SWGU (2002b:38) documentation as shown in Table4.4 & Diagram 4.3 indicates a high percentage of female participation in the 2000 election in all Khartoum state constituencies. 99 % at Jabal Uwliah is the highest recorded percentage of female voters, followed by Karray (Thowra female entrepreneurs) and East Nile at 97% each. Omdurman (Khalawi female entrepreneurs) had 96% and the lowest percentage was recorded for Ombadah (Tea sellers female entrepreneurs) at 92%. This information indicates that the study areas at Omdurman province can be arranged as follows: the highest participation was recorded for Karray 97% (where Thowra female entrepreneurs are located), followed by Omdurman 96% (where Khalawi female entrepreneurs are located) and finally Ombadah 92% (where tea seller female entrepreneurs are located).

In terms of gender participation and women empowerment in vote process in 2000 election per province/ constituency of Khartoum state this could be analysed by comparing the number of actual female/ male voters as percentage of total voters. As indicated in Table 4.4 female voters percentage is higher at East Nile which is equal to 93.7% and 6.3% for male, followed by Jabal Uwliah which is equal to 86.5% for female and 13.5% for male, then Omdurman which is equal to 74.4 % for female and 25.6% for male, Khartoum which is equal to 63.5% for female and 36.5 for male. Low female participation is recorded for Ombadah which is equal to 37.2 for female and 62.8% for male, and the lowest percentage of women participation in voting process was recorded for Karray (Thowra) constituency which is equal to 9.1% for female and 90.9% for male. This means that in Ombadah and Karray constituencies, male voters as a percentage of all voters exceed female voters. Therefore in Ombadah (Tea Sellers female entrepreneurs) and Karray (Thowra female entrepreneurs) women's political participation is very weak. It is important to question whether the SWGU microcredit programme is having any impact to strengthen the female entrepreneurs' political situation. We shall see this in the analysis of Chapter eight.

Comparing Tables 4.3 & Table 4.4, the percentage of female voters among those registered to vote is higher at Khartoum state which is equal to 96% than Northern Kordufan state which is equal to 70%. In Khartoum state the results indicate that at Karray (Thowra female entrepreneurs) and Ombadah (tea seller female entrepreneurs) the percentage of male voters exceeds the percentage of female voters. While in all Northern Kordufan the percentage of female voters exceeds the male voters in all constituencies.

The female entrepreneurs in the study sample responded when they were asked about their participation in the last election in 2000. In the literature of the SWGU (2002b:38) it was found that 30% indicated that they voted and the majority, 70%, did not vote. They attributed their weak participation in the election to many reasons. First, the traditional culture portrays politics as a male domain, blocking women's participation in the election. This was supported by the fact that the 1968 and 2000 election results indicate weak female participation even at Khartoum. Although the SWGU (2002b:38) showed that in 1968 the female participation is lower on average, in terms of gender, the percentage of females registered to vote who did vote was higher than male percentage.

Second, the lack of mobility of women restricts them from reaching the election centre. In addition, the general election corporation did not provide transport to deliver female voters to the election centers; therefore women living far away found difficulties reaching the election centers. Third, men and women vote from one place; therefore women were reluctant to participate in that election process. Fourth, household responsibilities are a core reason for weak participation in the election processes. Fifth, all elected candidates were representing one party and one programme. Thus within this narrow opportunity women's choice would depend on previous knowledge about the candidate. Usually women voters get this information from males, so if they did not get the information participation becomes pointless.

The female entrepreneurs' response has been supported by the fact that the political systems have been changing and consequently there was a change in the voting concepts between 1968 and 2000. During the first three periods of the multi-party governments the political parties were responsible for women's political activities and women worked in their political affiliation and under the umbrella of the party. This method of organising witnesses more democracy and wider opportunities for women to choose the right candidates based on their political programme. During the Salvation Revolution, 1989 to 1998, the concept was changed to the one party framework and the opportunity for choice is very narrow. All elected candidates represent one party and one programme and women are free only within this narrow opportunity to vote for the right candidates. One can conclude that this information indicates weak political empowerment at the local level even in urban areas.

.2. . Female political representation

To make the data more sensitive some of the available data has been disaggregated by gender from macro-level statistics. This data now provides an effective base for gender aware policy interventions for the SWGU. This data also broadens the available interpretations of women's empowerment. Thus this part of analysis will deal with inequality of female political participation and will be taken as a measurement of female political poverty. It will also assess gender inequality in political opportunities and the decision making process.

Analysis of the situation of women at the local level, as analysed in section 4.2.1.4 above, cannot be considered as a complete portrait of women's empowerment without analysis of the situation at the national level. Three indicators will be taken: women's share of parliamentary seats, women's participation in the legislature as senior officials or managers and women's share of professional and technical jobs. The assumption behind this analysis is that female decision makers at the national level who represent women at the local level are expected to support women at the local level by making their voices heard by male decision makers at the national level. Therefore, the following part of the study will also highlight Sudanese women in the political system at the national level which includes legislative and executive at national and state levels. The analysis will conclude whether implementation of the structural adjustment policies empowered women or led to greater feminization of poverty.

.2. . . In Legislative Apparatus

As indicated in Table 4.5 below, no woman managed to enter the first parliament. Only in 1965 after the October Revolution and through the graduated constituencies did women gain their full right to vote, elect and be elected. At that time only one woman managed to be a member of parliament and participate in the higher decision making processes.

The following analysis of the legislative situation of women indicates that during the period from 1973 to 1984 women's participation in the parliament and their representation in the National People's Councils was increasing, especially during the Fifth National People Council (1981-1984), but did not reach their designated quota representation. See Table 4.5: Sudanese Women's Participation in the Legislative Apparatus – 1965-2004 below for the detailed participation of women legislators, senior officials and managers.

Table 4.5

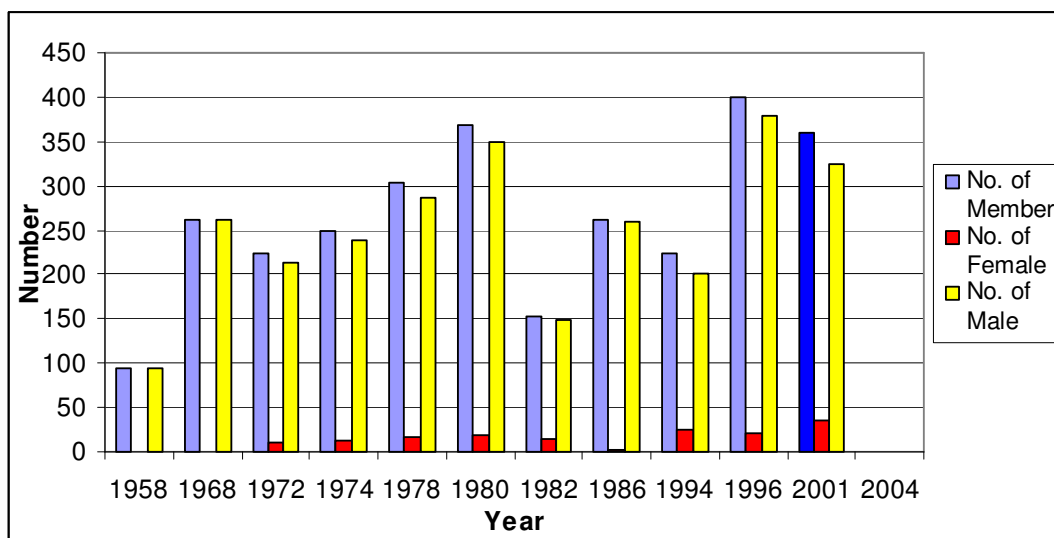
Sudanese Women's Participation in the Legislative Apparatus – 1965-2004

Year	Legislative Institution	No. of Member	No. of Female	No. of Male	Female Percentage	Remarks
1958	-	90	0			
1965	Legislative Institution	261	1	260	0.4	
1968	Constituent Assembly	261	0	261	0	
1972	First National People Council(1973)	225	11	214	4.9	
1974	Second National People Council (1974-1977)	250	12	238	4.8	
1978	Third National People Council(1978-1980)	304	17	287	5.6	
1980	Fourth National People Council (1980-1981)	368	18	350	4.9	
1982	Fifth National People Council (1981-1984)	153	14	149	9.1	
1986	Constituent Assembly (1986-1993)	261	2	259	0.8	Head of permanent education committee
1994	Transitional National Council(1994-1995)	225	25	200	11	Head of social affairs committee
1996	Transitional National Council (1996-2000)	400	21	379	5.3	Head of Industrial committee & Head of society development & Secretary of the Council
2001	National Council	360	35	325	9.7	Head of peace committee & head of social development committee.
2004	National Council			.	9.7	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SMDGs R 2005: 16) & (SWGUG2003:20)

Diagram 4.4

Sudanese Women's Participation in the
Legislative Apparatus – 1965-2004



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from ((SMDGs R 2005: 16) & (SWGU2003:20)

From Table 4.5 and the Diagram 4.4 above it is clear that from 1965 to 1982 women made very slow and gradual progress since their representation in the parliament. Then during the period 1986-1993 a dramatic reduction in their representation occurred, causing it to drop to 0.8% in 1994. Accompanying the period of structural adjustment and liberalisation policies application women's representation in the parliament faced drastic loss of their representation to levels lower than their first representation of 1965 (0.4%). In 1986 during the Constituent Assembly they lost what they had gained during the last two decades. Also from Table 4.5 it is clear that women's leadership and administrative roles within the Federal National Assembly were appearing for the first time to mitigate these drastic losses. In 1986, despite inequality and low representation, women's participation was increased to lead one of the parliament committees and became a head of the permanent education committee. In 1994 women gained the highest level of participation, 11%, since 1965 and managed to lead the social affairs committee in the National Assembly. In 1996, during the Transitional National Council, women's gains were again reduced from 11% to 5.3%. Despite that, and for the first time, they managed to occupy three positions of leadership within the parliament: head of the industrial committee, head of the social development committee and secretary of the council. In 1998 women gained 10% representation

in the Legislative Council at both federal and states levels. During the National Council 2001 their representation increased again to 9.7%. In 2004 the SMDGs R (2005) indicates that at the portion of seats held by women in the National Parliament remained the same.

There is some progress after the structural adjustment policies as the recent information from the Human Development Report 2007/2008 indicate that in 2007 the Seats in parliament held by women in lower house is equal to 17.8 % while for the upper house is 14%.

Being appointed to a leadership position for one of the parliament sub committees or politician sector within the parliament raises another challenging question: are the increasing female numbers in legislative system since 1994 strengthening and empowering women to make decisions within the parliament.

In this concern and according to Nafisa Ahmmed Al Amin, previous parliament member, personal interview (2006) she explained that increasing women's political participation representation in the parliament did not permit them to make decisions or confront women's issues. Therefore, such parliamentary managerial involvement is very weak and up to now no woman has been elected within the parliament hierarchy to reach the position of Naieb.

However, during these periods differentiation in representation is wide and there is a huge gender difference between elected members in the Legislative Council in terms of election by professional. The example is clear from Table 4.6 and Diagram 4.5: Professional Distribution of the Elected Members of the National Congress 2000 as indicated below:

Table 4.6

Professional Distribution of the Elected Members of the
National Congress 2000

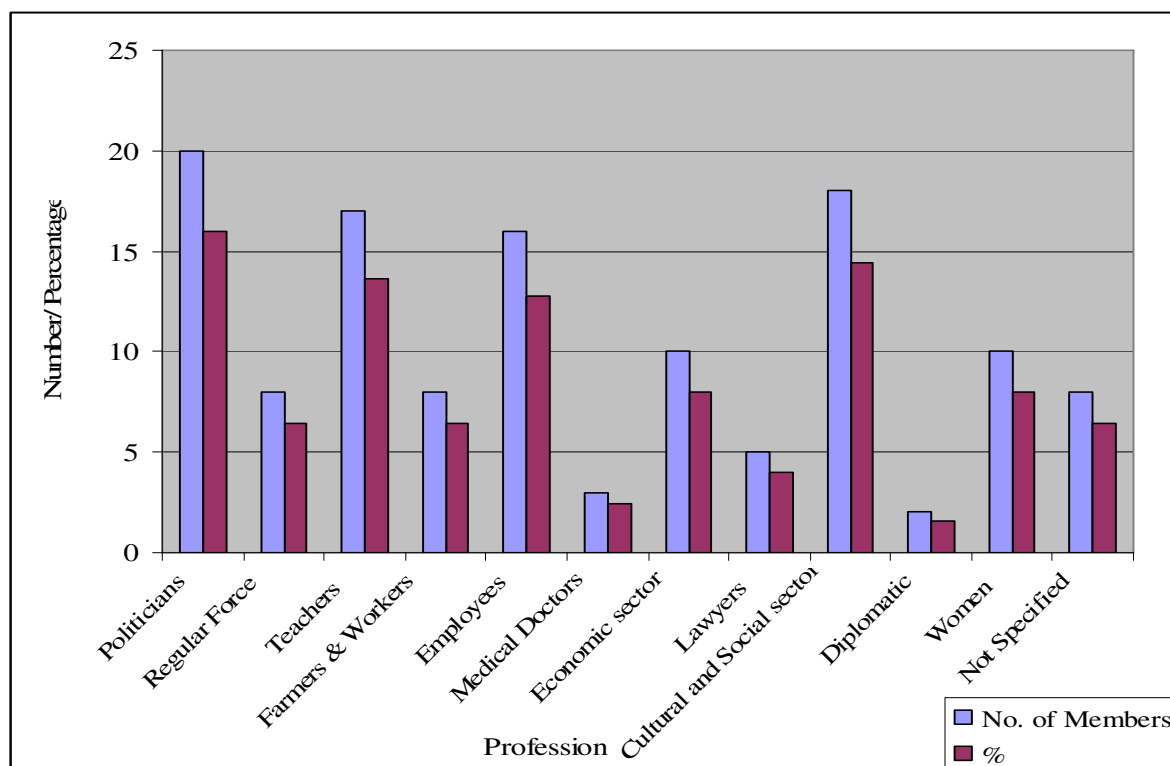
Profession	No. of Members	%
Politicians	20	16
Regular Force	8	6.4
Teachers	17	13.6
Farmers & Workers	8	6.4
Employees	16	12.8
Medical Doctors	3	2.4
Economic sector	10	8
Lawyers	5	4
Cultural and Social sector	18	14.4
Diplomatic	2	1.6
Women	10	8
Not Specified	8	6.4
Total	125	100

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2003:28)

Table 4.6 above and Diagram 4.5 below indicate that the participation of women as a separate sector is low at 8%. The highest percentage of participation is for the politicians sector, (16%); followed by the Cultural and Social sector, (14.4%); and the Teachers sector, (13.6%). The lowest sectors are recorded for Medical Doctors, (2.4%) and Diplomatic, (1.6%). However, the data does not indicate if women gained seats within these power sectors to increase their representation and enhance their involvement in decision making process.

Diagram 4.5

Professional Distribution of the Elected Members of the
National Congress 2000



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWG2003:28)

.2. . .2 In Executive Apparatus

Another indicator of the feminisation of poverty is women’s low political participation in the executive apparatus from 1973 to 1999 as indicated in Table 4.7: Women’s Participation in the Executive Apparatus, 1973-1999 and Diagram 4.6: Women’s Participation in the Executive Apparatus, 1973-1999.

Table 4.7

Women's Participation in the Executive Apparatus, 1973-1999

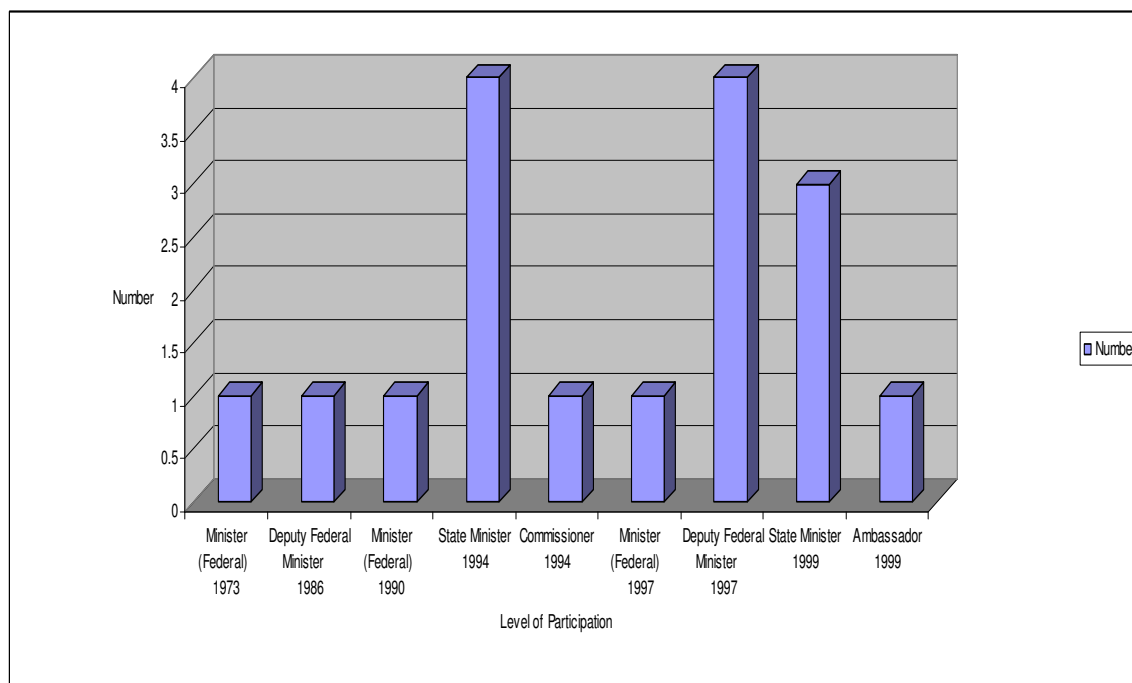
Year	Regime	Level of Participation	Number	Remark
1973	May Regime	Minister (Federal)	1	
1986	Transitional Regime (Umma Regime 1986-89)	Deputy Federal Minister	1	
1990	National Salvation Revolution	Minister (Federal)	1	
1994	National Salvation Revolution	State Minister	4	
		Commissioner	1	State of Bahr Al Jabal & Juba
1997	National Salvation Revolution	Minister (Federal)	1	
1999	National Salvation Revolution	Deputy Federal Minister	4	
		State Minister	3	
		Ambassador	1	
Total				

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Bedri 1983:15) & (SWGU 2003:30)

Table 4.7 above and Diagram 4.6 below indicate that there is weak women's participation in the executive apparatus from 1973 to 1999 during the structural adjustment policies. Before 1973 women were not offered any chance to participate in the executive apparatus. Within sixteen years from 1973 – 1989 there were only two ministers representing women in the executive apparatus. There was one female Federal Minister during the May regime in 1973 and one female Deputy Federal Minister (Social Welfare) during the Transitional regime from 1986 to 1989.

Diagram 4.6

Women’s Participation in the Executive Apparatus, 1973-1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Bedri 1983:15) & (SWGU 2003:30)

The participation of women in the executive apparatus is very low mainly during the structural adjustment policies and increased dramatically after the structural adjustment policies, restructuring programmes and liberalisation policies. During the period 1979-1985 Sudan implemented a structural adjustment programme implementing a 3-year economic restructuring programme in July 1990, in 1992 the government decided to use full Liberalisation (UNDP 1998:10). The number of women participation during the National Salvation Revolution period from 1990-1999 is 15 women in positions of power including 7 State Ministers, 2 Federal Ministers, 4 Deputy Federal Ministers, 1 Commissioner and 1 Ambassador. During the year 1999, women in the executive apparatus reached their optimum level of representation with 8 of the 15 officers. However, the recent information from the Human Development Report 2007/2008 indicates that the rate of Women in government at ministerial level (% of total) in 2005 is equal to 2.6 (HDR 2007:345). This indicates that although there is positive change in the

ministerial presentation after the structure adjustment policies but the percentage in term of gender equality is still low.

Sudanese Women Ministers in Sudanese governments hold specific portfolios such as health, social welfare, public services, manpower or cabinet affairs. In 2000, the Sudanese President appointed a cabinet-level Advisor on Women's Affairs. There are also other managerial positions held by women in different ministries such as an Advisor for Women's Affairs within the Southern States Coordinating Council. There is a women's policy unit within the Ministry of Social Planning headed by a female Federal Social Welfare Minister. This unit draws up national policies and plans for women's development, addressing women's poverty in the National Comprehensive Poverty Eradication Strategy. There are related women's development units in many ministries, corporations, institutions and institutes of higher education that participate in the implementation of women's development plans under the umbrella of the Comprehensive National Poverty Reduction Strategy that will be dealt with in detail in chapter five.

Increasing the number of women in the executive apparatus does not mean authentic participation of women in decision making. It does indicate increasing awareness among women and the government of the importance of women's participation in the executive apparatus. Increasing the number of women is an approach for women to gain their rights in all fields of political and economic development. If they manage to grasp these opportunities to bridge the gender gap in representation in both legislative and executive apparatus, they will strengthen their capacity to effectively negotiate and make their own decisions.

.2.2 Economic factors

.2.2. Introduction to labour force laws

This part of the chapter will deal with the economic factors that contributed to the feminisation of poverty in Sudan and can be illustrated by low female participation in both public and private economic sectors. This part of the study will concentrate on the recent reliable data available in Sudan from the Human Development Report 2007/2008 (2007), WB Report (2003) and SWGU

(2003) literatures. In addition, other data collected in 1999, 1996 and 1990 about women's participation in the economic sectors and the labour laws stipulated to protect and promote female participation in the labour force documented by many authors such as Khorasani (1999), Al Naiel (1999) as well as other studies done by SWGU (2003). Analysing this data will identify the gender issues that contributed to the feminisation of poverty during the SAP, not from physical and monetary deprivation, but from social deprivation and vulnerability. This kind of poverty can be understood in terms of lack of opportunity to work as male counterparts who are employed both in private and public sectors, limited chances to be promoted and imposed discriminative work laws.

According to Al Naiel (1999:44) there are important events and developments which occurred after independence and after the second democratic ruling period in 1968. The employees' cadre committee, under the pressure from the SWGU, recommended that women workers should obtain equal payment as men for equal jobs as well as pension services in the same condition as men. In 1968 the Constituent Assembly offered female university graduates and teachers female labourers equal payment as men for the performing the same jobs and pension services other job categories were not included due to the economic situation.

In 1973 the General Labour law was issued and considered a great gain in legislation for women. The general labour laws stipulate that employment in general or public services should be based on free competitions and according to the qualification and experience of the candidate and that all Sudanese labourers have the right to compete for a job. In addition, the rights of pension services for men and women workers are based on the Item (No.25) from the labour law. In 1974 the social insurance law was issued which offers female workers in the private sectors e.g. in temporary and other labour work the right to get the gratuity, benefits of end of service and pension based on specific bases and without discrimination between the sexes. In 1975 the labour law of pension treated female workers the same as male workers. To protect labourers in private sectors, labour laws on industrial safety are applied equally to both males and females. There are certain items of the law that are specifically for the protection of women, such as forbidding evening work between 08:00 pm and 04:00 am and not being allowed to perform dangerous jobs inside the factories. In 1975 the labour law ensures equal rights for women in recruitment,

promotion, leaves, transport and other allowances provided for male workers based on the labour laws items (No. 15, 89, 90 and 70).

To regulate the work relationships between employers and employees in private sectors, a labour law was issued in 1976 and to achieve greater equality. The law was revised in 1981 and called the Law of Individual Work Relationships. In the law the minimum work conditions and payments in private sectors are determined. Employers have the right to offer better conditions of work. The duties of female workers toward their employers are stipulated. The law also deals with equal payments, gratuity, benefits of end of service, annual leaves, delivery and maternal leaves, daily hours of work and evening shifts.

According to Abdu Al Rahman (1999:92) in 1994 labour laws were issued to maintain what female labourers gained before, and item (No.18) stipulates that selection of employees to work in the public sectors should be based on free competition without gender discrimination, equal payment for equal work, and rights to promotion, training, mission and leaves without gender discrimination (Abdu Al Rahman 1999:92). In 1995 other items of the law were added allowing lactating women one hour per day for child breast feeding, leave to take care of sick family member, husband's or wife's companionship leave in case of missions, birth leaves for eight weeks, motherhood leave, and complete Ida leave for husband's death of four months and ten days. However, in practice and mainly during the last two decades, especially during the structural adjustments, there were many violations and breakdowns in these labour laws related to the leaves due to gender and cultural factors preventing female selection for work and giving priority to male. Thus unequal representation and low participation in the labour force, lack of promotion to higher work positions, unequal chance of being trained, etc. increase the feminisation of poverty not only in terms of physical deprivation but other social deprivations such as lack of respect, lack of empowerment and increased vulnerability.

The challenge facing the SWGU is how to materialize these labour laws for the favour of women.

.2.2.2 Female participation in the labour force

Sudanese women contribute significantly to the household income through both paid and unpaid work. According to the Human Development Report (2007:354) in 2005 Female economic activity (aged 15 and older) is 23%. As % of male rate is 33 (HDR 2007:354). And between the early 19970 and the early 2000s, according to the WB (2003:13) women's participation rate in labour force rose from 26.7 % in 1970 % to 28.8% in 1997 . This also supported by the SMDGs (2005:15) Between the early 1990s and the early 2000s, according to the 2001 Sudan Programme of Action for Development, women's economic participation rate rose from 18% to 30% (SMDGs 2005:15). Al though there are variation between the data HDR(2007) and the SMDGs R (2005) but all these statistics of women's participation in the economic activities in 2005 indicate that still women lack behind.

More than that woman in labour force encounter with challenges in the selection and the appointment for the job. Selection and appointment of women for any job is always considered a critical point where gender discriminative behaviour and practices are revealed. To eliminate gender discrimination in the selection and interview process, the 1994 labour laws and the decree of appointment for job Item (No. 18) stipulate that selection for any job is based on honest free competition through interviews and the selection for the job will done according to the job requirements without any gender discrimination. As summarised by Al Naiel (1999:44) the selection committee for the public services jobs is formulated but in practice, many violations against female selection were recorded by the committee members during the selection processes.

These violations start from the announcement of the job, which is limited to the board of the committee selection building, attitudes of the members of the committee selection members toward female work, the kind of questions within the interview based on the knowledge of Islamic religion education (reciting some Quran verses and Hadith), and the candidates' code of decent dress and behaviour, most questions are not related to the nature of the work. Such attitudes and practices lead to unequal opportunities for females to participate in the labour force. This can be clearly proved from recent data documented by SWGU research secretariat on female participation in the labour force for public and private sectors.

.2.2.2. In public sectors

The information under this section is compiled from the SWGU (2003:15) documentation as well as from Khorasani (1999:122) to compare the participation of women in public services during and after the SAP.

Table 4.8

Participation of Women in Public Services 1994 - 2003

Field	Percentage 1994	Percentage 2003
Directors	0	4.1
High Administrators	7	9.2
Middle Administrators	22	22.3
Executives	23	23.2
Clerks	48	77.8

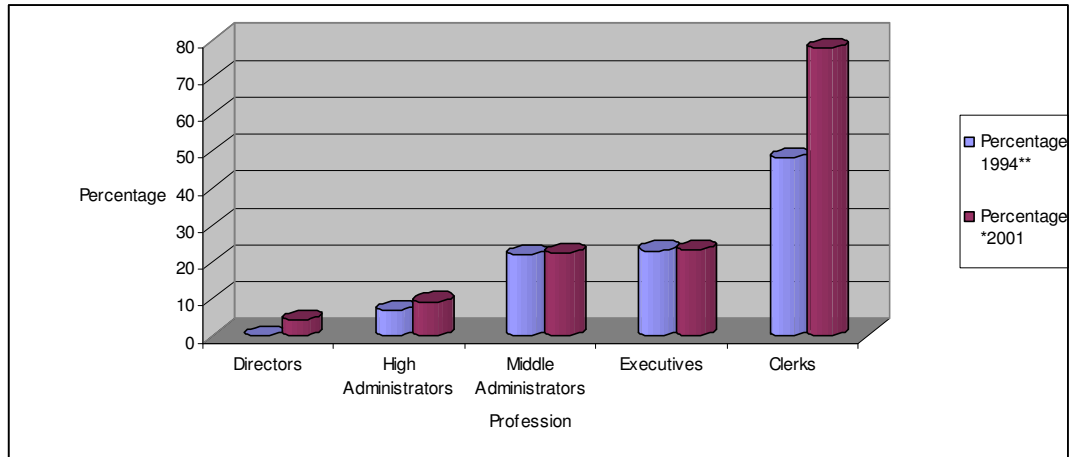
Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Khorasani 1999:122) and (SWGU 2003:15)

As indicated in Table 4.8 above and Diagram 4.7 below the public employment hierarchy starts from the bottom with the clerks, executive, middle or technical administrators, high administrators and directors at the top level. The female participation percentage starts decreasing for the higher fields of employment such as executive, middle and administrative jobs.

Women's percentages for the executive and middle administration jobs remain the same for almost seven years, 23% and 22% respectively. Similarly, there is little increase in the percentage for high administration positions from 7 % in 1994 to 9.2% in 2001. In 2001, the highest percentage recorded is 77.8 % for women who work as clerks at the bottom of the public employment hierarchy.

Diagram 4.7

Participation of Women in Public Services 2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Khorasani 1999:122) and (SWGU 2003:15)

The table and the diagram also indicate that at the higher level of the public employment hierarchy, only 4.1 % of directors are female. High level director jobs are dominated by male partners, especially in 1994, during the structural adjustment and liberalisation period, when no women were represented in this position. The same male domination is clear for high administrators where there was a small increase from 7% in 1994 to 9.2% in 2001. Women in middle administrator and executive positions achieved only fractional increases from 1994 to 2001. Females dominate clerks occupations at the bottom levels in the public employment hierarchy and there is a significant increase during the adjustment and liberalisation policies from 48 % in 1994 to 77.8 % in 2001.

This analysis is supported by Khorasani (1999:116) who mentioned that the labour laws of 1991 give women the right to compete for higher positions, but in practice some jobs were monopolised by men like justice, diplomatic and attorney general jobs. And appointments for these jobs have been postponed since 1991. In addition, a diplomatic woman cannot be transferred to work outside the country without the companionship of Mohrim (blood relatives) and many female workers in these diplomatic positions were transferred for the general sake of jobs Khorasani (1999:116).

Gender discrimination can affect the sector in which female worker can be selected for appointment. This is shown in Table 4.9 and Diagram 4.8: Public Service: Participation of Women in Professional Work, 2001.

Table 4.9

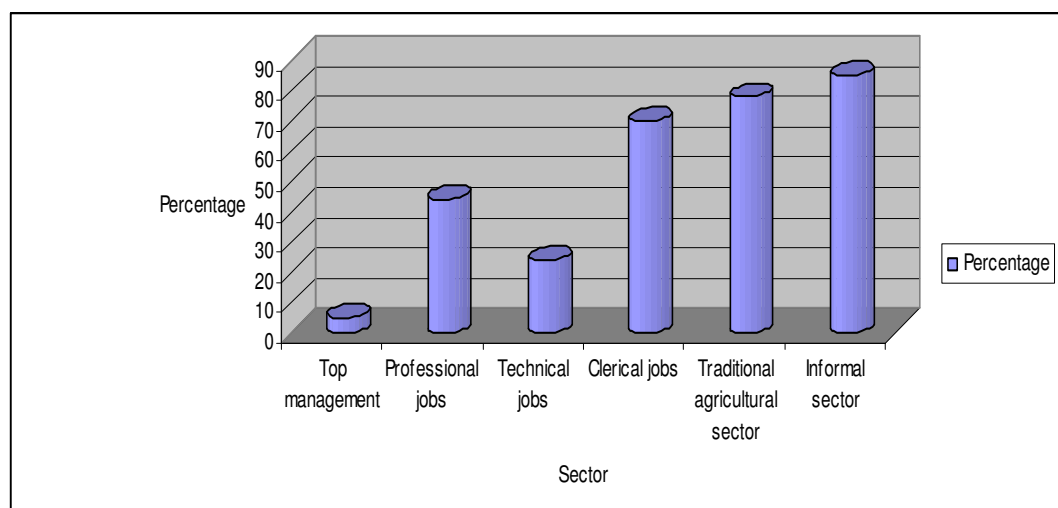
Public Service: Participation of Women in Professional Work 2001

Field	Percentage
Professional & Technical Workers	42.2
Directors & Business Managers	31.7
Clerical Workers	74
Sale Workers	33.5
Service Workers	24.8
Agricultural Workers	2.4
Production Workers	5.2

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2003:15)

Diagram 4.8

Public Service: Participation of Women in Professional Work 2001



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2003:15)

According to the SWGU (2003:15) and the SMDGs R (2005) the highest percentage of female participation in the labour force was recorded for the Clerical Workers economic sector, 74% and 70% respectively. According to the SWGU (2003:15) the lowest percentage of female participation in labour force was recorded for the agriculture sector, 2.4%. The challenge that can be inferred from this analysis is that although women play important role in subsistence agriculture sector in the west and southern Sudan and need more advance technology that need to be transferred by professional workers but professional workers are scared.

.2.2.2.2 In private sectors

Table 4.10 and Diagram 4.9 below represent the low level of female participation in the labour force in the private sector.

Table 4.10

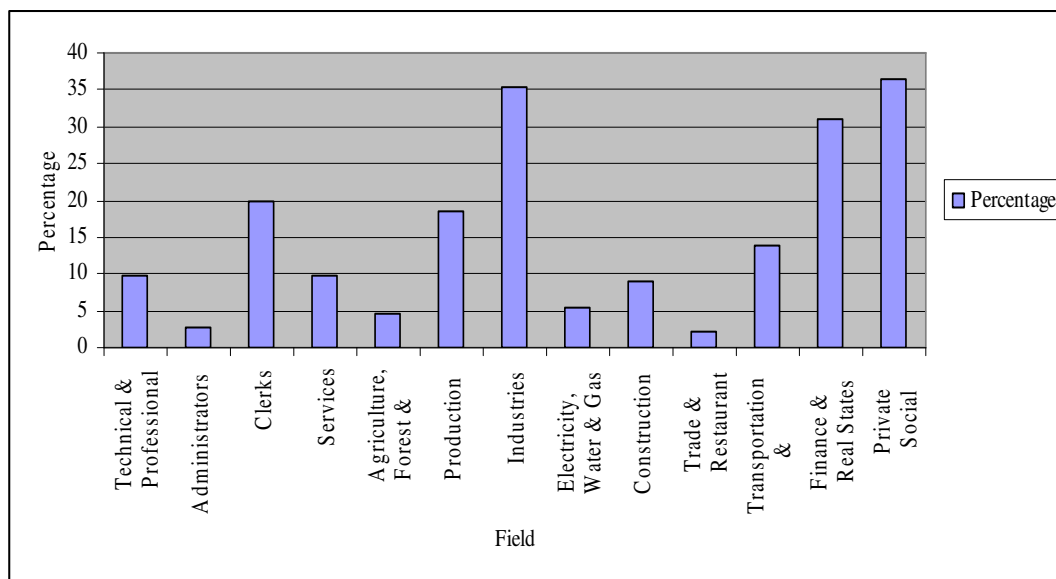
Participation of Women in Private Sectors, 2001

Field	Percentage
Technical & Professional	9.9
Administrators	2.6
Clerks	19.8
Services	9.7
Agriculture, Forest & Hunts	4.53
Production	18.5
Industries	35.3
Electricity, Water & Gas	5.41
Construction	9
Trade & Restaurant	2.3
Transportation & Warehouses	13.9
Finance & Real States	31.1
Private Social Services	36.5

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2003:16)

Diagram 4.9

Participation of Women in Private Sectors, 2001



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2003:16)

Table 4.10 and Diagram 4.9 Participation of Women in Private Sectors, 2001 indicate that women’s participation in the private sector compared to the participation of men did not exceed 36.5 % on average. During and after the restructuring of economic policies, the participation of females is lower in the fields of Trade & Restaurant 2.3%, Administration 2.6%, Agriculture, Forest & Hunting 4.53 % and 5.4 % in Electricity, Water & Gas. There are more females working in the Public & Private Social Services, 36.5%, Industries, 35.3 %, and Finance & Real state 31.1%. Comparing women’s participation in the private sector with the public sector, it is clear that participation of women in the private sector is less than their participation in the public sector. On average the private sector accounts for 36.5% while the public sector accounts for 45% on average in 2001. However, the situation has been reversed during 2000s as further analysis of the factors that cause women to join the private work will be highlighted in the following part.

.2.2. Working conditions

The negative impact of the Structural Adjustment Policy (SAP) -1990s, mainly during the implementation of the liberalisation policy, when the state adopted the privatisation and economic reform policies can be illustrated in the following lines. The state sold public sector investments to the private sector to reform the human resources structures and cadre who worked in these institutions by reducing the number of their workers. Political affiliation played important role in firing the employees from their jobs as it is said by Khorasani (1999:114) the intention was to reduce production costs and get rid of workers with undesirable political affiliations (Khorasani1999:114). This is also supported by UNDP (1998:10) In 1992 the government decided to use full liberalisation as a shock treatment for the economy. The pound was devaluated, all quantitative restrictions on foreign trade were removed, prices raised and the number of civil servants reduced (UNDP1998:10)

Also according to Khorasani (1999:114) who said that privatisation and economic reform policies led to getting rid of many labourers who worked in the public sector Khorasani (1999:114). The rationale was that there was over employment. Another consequence was the decentralisation of many institutions under the federal ruling system, including the Sport & Youth, Housing, General Labour and Facilities sectors. Over employment was revealed in huge numbers in Railways Transport, Revere Transport, White Nile Leather Tanning Institution, Halfa Sugar Factory, Sudan Airways, and Culture and Communication. Khorasani (1999:114) said that as a way of gender discrimination, women gained the lion's share on the lists of the over employed who did not get a chance to be trained or employed elsewhere (Khorasani 1999:114).

According to Khorasani (1999:11) female participation in the private sector was 8% in 1983 and increased to reach 14% in 1991. This dramatic increase in female unemployment within eight years is due to structural adjustments and privatisation policies. Many public investment institutions and factories were closed due to lack of raw material, the rising cost of the inputs of production, and rising taxation of production. That situation led employed men and women to be without jobs, increasing the number of unemployed workers. In addition, due to privatisation and economic reform policies, many employed women were fired or left their work due to their

political affiliation, Al Salih Al Amm, lack of adherence to labour laws, or violation of women's rights of the labour laws rights. Thus a huge number of women workers found themselves without work. For their family survival they entered the private or informal sectors. Males are reluctant to work in the private sector due to lower pay in this sector than the public sector. Also, men believe women's work in the private sector is trivial, thus do not prefer to perform such kinds of work. On the other hand, the private sector prefers to employ trained females to reduce production cost. Thus, not all women coming from the public sector got a chance to be qualified. There was low percentage of women workers in the private sector due to the lack of previous technical training while working in the public sectors. Also, the private sector prefers not to employ women due to the advantages that they have obtained from labour laws that offer women delivery leave of two months that cost and affect the private sector work.

Cultural structure and traditional values and customs which are biased toward employment of men and consider women at a secondary level in the society lead to greater women's marginalisation. There is a famous Sudanese saying If a woman is an axe she would not be able to crack the head. Literally, this means that if the woman has been equipped by education and reaches a high level of qualification she is also a woman who cannot change, defeat, compete or manage to get the same advantages as men. This perception is still very active and effective within the Sudanese families in urban as well as in rural areas. In this respect, a man, as a son, husband or father enjoys special status and higher position than a woman. The spread of illiteracy among the people, especially the rural society, supports the existence of such inherited traditional perceptions about women and do not encourage women to be educated or continue their education or enter the formal employment jobs, especially after marriage.

In this respect, some women have become owners of private institutions faced some constraints relating to obtaining licences, starting with the committees at the local and quarter levels where conservative people hesitate to issue the required certificates and documents. Khorasani (1999:116) mentioned that The Government and authorised officers refused to issue licences for women workers to open custom offices for importing goods without any reason (Khorasani 1999:116).

.2.2. Federal remedy system

Application of decentralisation and the federal ruling system led to the transference of many centralised government officers to different regions and remote areas where the working conditions were not suitable. The female labour force was the most affected by that transfer due to lack of suitable working conditions, being tied to their families, conservative family values that restrict women's mobility. The most affected are the married workers whose husbands are working in the same sector. Without any transfer coordination for the spouses, each one can be transferred to a different region. Khorasani (1999:116) mentioned that these conditions led many women workers to resign or be fired because they had not adhered to the transfer regulations (Khorasani 1999:116).

.2.2. Work promotion

The General Labour Laws, 1973 for Promotion Item Number10 indicates that the selection of a worker to be promoted to a higher level is based on work performance, qualification and years of experience in the same position. Recently, the labour laws concerning women have been changed many times. This prevented women from gaining equal rights to work. For instance, a woman gained the right to get leave without payment to join her husband and has delivery leave for seven years during her lifetime of work. This had been reformed so the leaves could be taken together, but now a woman worker must restart her work each year, otherwise she will lose her job.

In 1994 the labour law was reformed to include work suitability and compulsory execution of a defence training course as criteria for promotion. These two preconditions for women's promotion have restricted women's promotion as well as their sustainability and continuation of employment. Joining defence training courses is not related to the rank of job a woman has competed for and is not related to the job duties or the performance level of the woman worker. In addition, the training course is not practical for many women workers due to age, family relations, and societal values that did not accept female work in military fields at that time.

Another precondition is the adoption of additional criteria for the worker's suitability score based on the suitability assessments. Both Khorasani (1999:119) and the SWGU (2003:15) stressed that when competing for a higher position female workers need to be assessed to judge their suitability for the work. Such assessment of female workers depends on another scoring system apart from their work performance that caters for 70%. In other words the female worker will reserve additional ten score in this assessment, excluding the scores of the job performance which includes scores for report, qualifications, or experience. The workers' suitability score should be determined by the Higher Council for Administrative Reform which represents the higher administrative organisation and does not deal with workers performance in their individual units. If all competing employees, male and female, are at the same university level of graduation and have the same academic qualifications there will be no difference in their assessment results but in spite that preferences will be given to male workers. There are also five points of the performance score for general appearance of the workers.

Women's decent dress will be assessed differently by males based on their own views. These two additional promotion bases of assessment affect women workers more than men workers due to cultural impressions about women's code of behaviour, way of dressing etc, and the male's conception about women's work. Thus, the difference in scores earned due to the job performance report and qualifications may not be very wide between male and female workers. Any difference will be due to worker suitability assessment which greatly affects the competition for promotion. Consequently, the promotion of women's workers is blocked and they remain in their job rank. Moreover, this leads women to perceive themselves as inferior to males and de-motivates qualified women to pursue promotion. This can be substantiated with reference to Khorasani (1999:119) gives examples by saying that "First Secretary in the Ministry of Labour was transferred to pension services because she refused to join the defence training course. Another woman in a high ranking position in the Ministry of Education also resigned as having the same case. And there was no provision in police labour law for police women's promotion higher than lieutenant colonel after that they will be transferred to pension services" (Khorasani 1999:119).

The low promotion trends of women in Federal Ministries during the period 1994 and 2001 is indicated in Table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11

Participation of Women in Federal Ministries, 2001

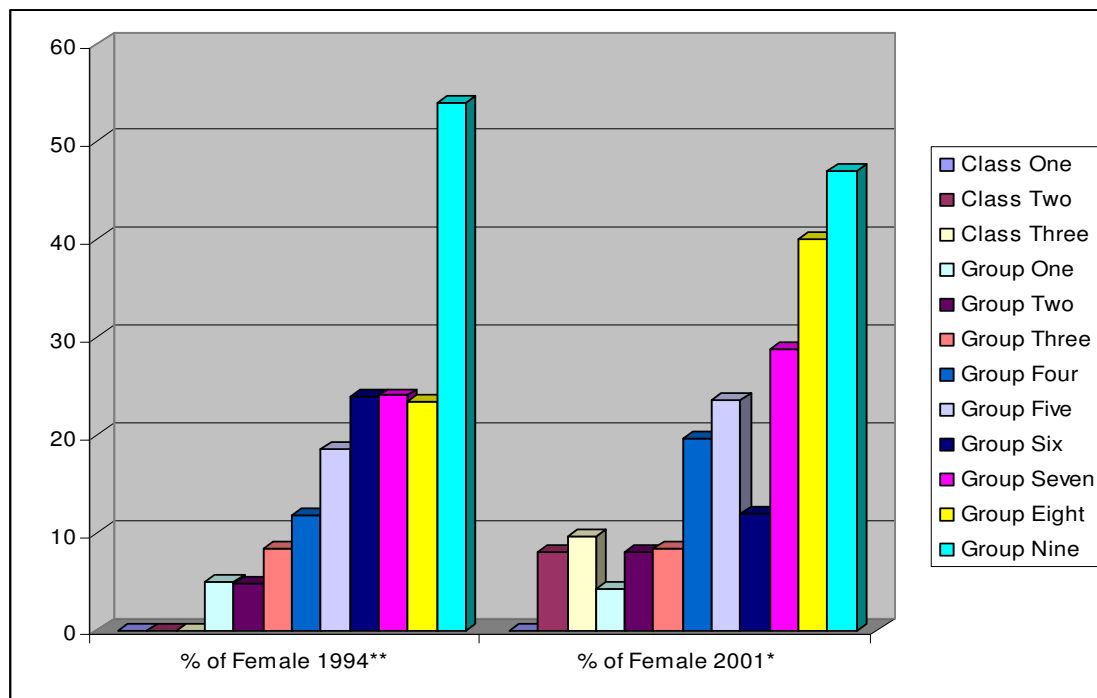
Rank	% of Female 1994	% of Female 2001
Class One	0	0
Class Two	0	8
Class Three	0	9.6
Group One	5	4.3
Group Two	4.7	7.9
Group Three	8.4	8.3
Group Four	11.8	19.7
Group Five	18.5	23.5
Group Six	23.9	12
Group Seven	24	28.7
Group Eight	23.4	40
Group Nine	54	47
Group Ten	NA	53
Group Twelve	NA	68.4
Group Fourteen	NA	65.6

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2003:16) & (Khorasani 1999: 120)

The information presented in Table 4.11 above and Diagram 4.10 below show that the public sector is a pioneer for employing large number of women in Sudan. In 2001 women's participation in the public sector increased and women were promoted to reach upper positions that are Class Two equal to 8%, and Class Three equal to 9.6%. In other words, in 1994 there were no university female graduates promoted to the higher three ranks of employment represented by Classes One, Two and Three. Groups Two, Four, Five, Seven and Eight records indicate increasing numbers of female workers during the period from 1994 to 2001. However, the highest increase in promotion is clearly for Group Eight from 23.4% to 40%. The lowest is Group Two showing an increase from 4.7% to 7.9%. Group One decreased from 5% to 4.3%. Group Three remain virtually the same from 80.4% to 80.3%. Group Six reduced dramatically from 33.9% to 12% and Group Nine reduced from 54% to 47%.

Diagram 4.10

Participation of Women in Federal Ministries 2001



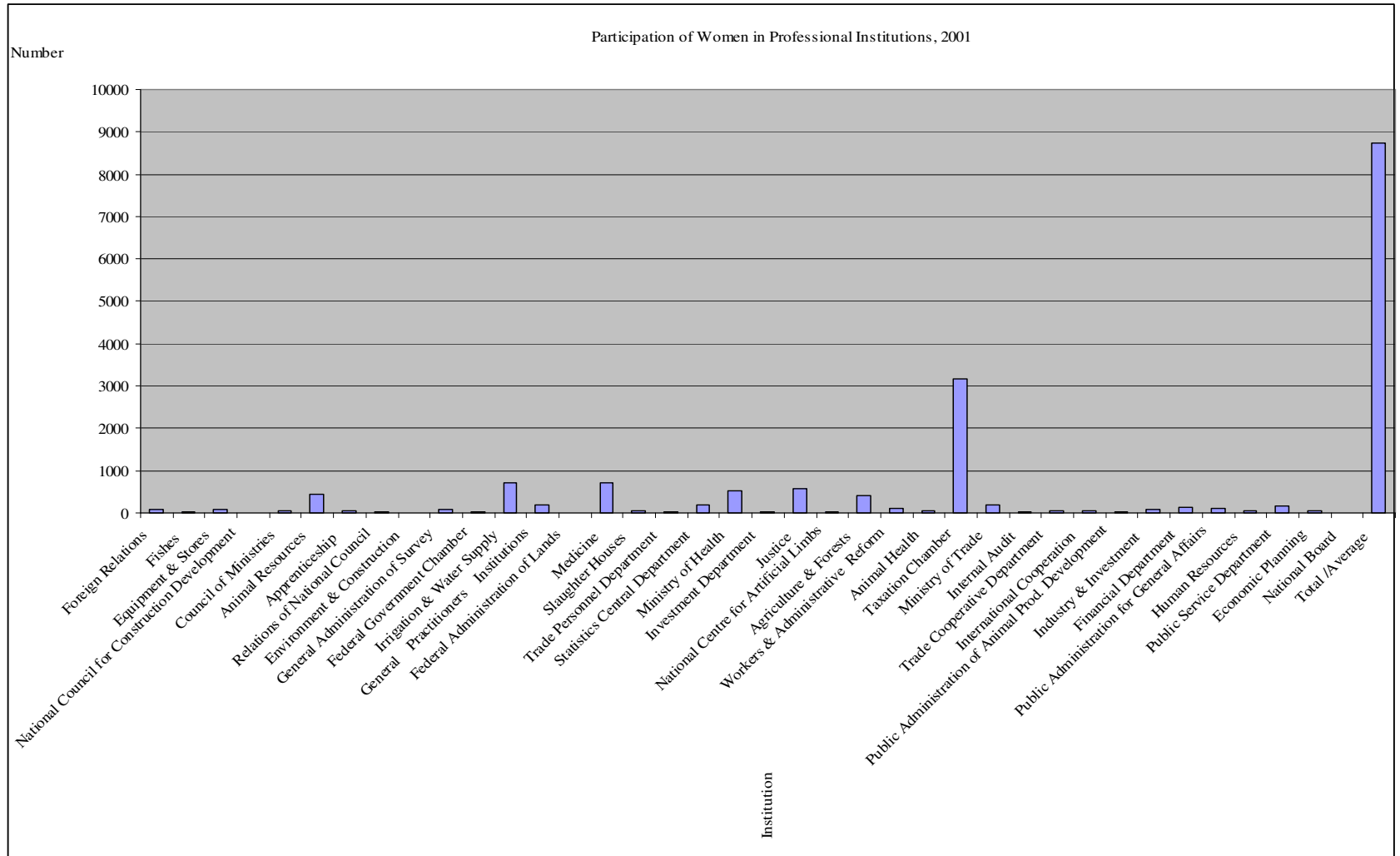
Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2003:16) & (Khorasani 1999: 120).

Information about Groups Fourteen, Twelve and Ten in 1994 is not available. However in 2001 female participation in Group Fourteen is equal to 65.6%, Group Twelve is equal to 68.4%, and Group Ten is equal to 53% these percentages indicate that women’s participation in the lower ranks is greater than men’s participation in these groups. This is also attributed to male migration for better job opportunities or entering the private sector.

Annex-1 Table 4.12 page 427 and Diagram 4.11 Participation of Women in Some Professional Institutions, 2001 below indicate there are 38 professional institutions that offer opportunities for female participation. These opportunities differ from one institution to another. The National Board offers the greatest opportunity for female participation with the percentage of female employees recorded at 70%, followed by Economic Planning, 66.7%. In Justice and the National Centre for Artificial Limbs 50% of employees are female. Similarly, 50.6% of employees in Agriculture and Forest are female. Few females are employed in Foreign Relations, 11.2%, or Fishery, 17%.

Diagram 4.11

Participation of Women in Professional Institutions, 2001



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU2003:17-18)

.2.2. Technical training

In 1976 labour law issued a training law which guarantees rights for labourers to training opportunities without gender discrimination inside the country and abroad. As it is summarized by Khorasani (1999:123) in practice, gender discrimination infiltrated the training laws. In the case of training abroad, a male trainee is offered tickets for his wife and children while a female trainee is offered tickets for her children only. She is not offered tickets for her husband because he is perceived as a breadwinner and responsible for his wife, not vice versa. In most cases female trainees were not able to provide their husbands tickets. This was considered a violation of the labour law requiring equal payment for equal work as well as subordination of female workers' status and capabilities.

However, in 1989 women labourers, through their trade union and individually, called for equality in training abroad and provision of their husbands' tickets. Labour laws from 1937, 1991, and 1994 stipulate that women workers have the right to be trained like male workers and that each unit head is responsible for capacity building of the staff under his supervision. However, in practice the situation is different. According to the 1998 records of the National Administration for Training, women are usually concentrated on training inside the country due to their involvement in clerk and simple technical jobs. The percentage being trained abroad is low compared to males. The 1998 data represented in the following tables indicate gender discrimination in training inside and outside the country during the implementation of the structural and liberalisation policies.

Table 4.13 and Diagram 4.12, below illustrate that internal training for women workers in 1998 are less than men for both long and short term training. The average percentage of females receiving long term training is equal to 37.8% while male is equal to 62.2% and short term training is 29.8% for female while for male it is 70.2%. Both represent unequal training chances compared to male training. Long and short term training inside the country are higher for males than females.

Table 4.13

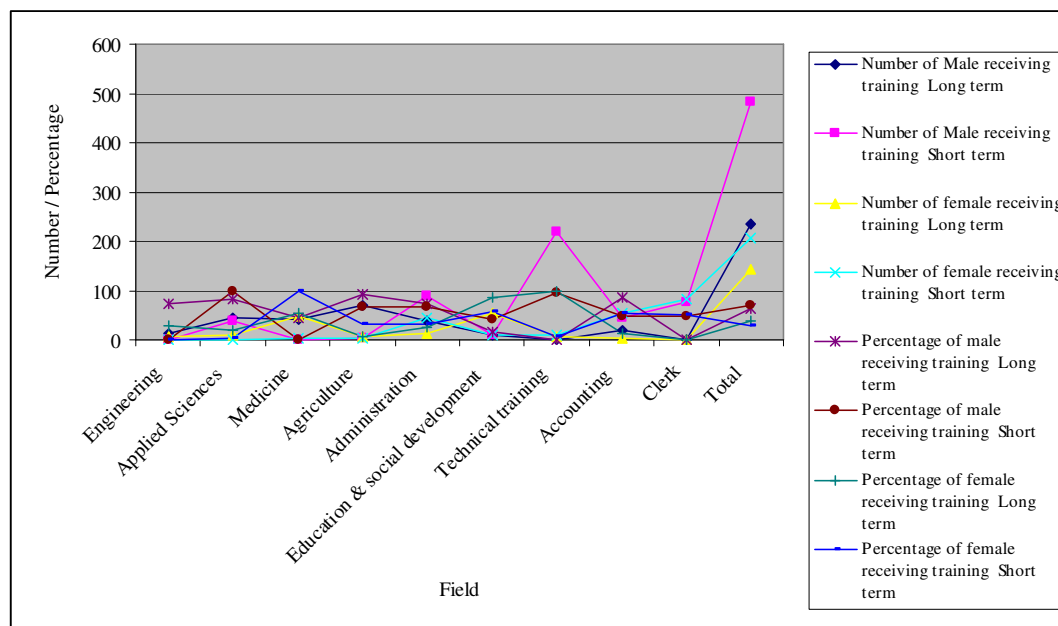
Training Inside the Country by Gender -1998

Field of Training	Number of Male receiving training		Number of female receiving training		Percentage of male receiving training		Percentage of female receiving training	
	Long term	Short term	Long term	Short term	Long term	Short term	Long term	Short Term
Engineering	13	0	5	0	72.2	0	27.8	0
Applied Sciences	46	38	10	1	82.1	97.4	17.9	2.6
Medicine	40	0	48	3	45.5	0	54.5	100
Agriculture	69	4	5	2	93.3	66.7	6.7	33.3
Administration	37	90	13	43	74	67.7	26	32.3
Education & social development	10	8	54	11	15.7	42.1	84.3	57.9
Technical training	0	220	5	11	0	95.2	100	4.8
Accounting	20	46	3	53	87	46.5	13	53.5
Clerk	0	77	0	81	0	48.7	0	51.3
Total	235	483	143	205	62.2	70.2	37.8	29.8

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Khorasani 1999:123)

Diagram 4.12

Training Inside the Country by Gender -1998



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Khorasani 1999:123)

As it appears from the information documented by Khorasani (1999:123) in Table 4.13 the greatest number of males receiving long term training is equal to 69 is in the Agriculture field while females is 5, followed by 46 in the Applied Science field. The greatest number of females is equal to 54 who received long term training in the Education field and Social Science. Then the field of Medicine catered for 48. For short term training, the greatest number of males was in the Technical field, 220, followed by Administration, 90, while the greatest number of females was in Clerk, 81, followed by Accounting. These results represent the gender gap in training, especially in the short term training. In short term training two fields were dominated by males Technical and Administrative. In long term training two fields were dominated by males Agriculture and Applied Science. In short term training two fields were dominated by females, Clerk and Accounting. In long term training two fields were dominated by females, Education & Social Development and Medicine. These are regarded as traditional fields of work for Sudanese females. In long term training the gender gap is greatest in the Agriculture field, where 69 males and only 5 females were trained. In the Applied Science field males numbered 46 while females numbered only 10. In short term training the gender gap is greatest in the Technical training, 220 males and merely 11 females. Administration is next with 9 males and 43 females. Concentrating in traditionally female fields of training such as Education and Social Development (teachers) and Medicine (nurses) will not provide chances for women to be promoted up the hierarchy to reach the highest decision making positions.

Table 4.14 and Diagram 4.13 below indicate that the number of males trained abroad is fewer than females trained abroad for both long and short term training. No long term training was provided for female engineers and only 3 had short term training. In agriculture, only 2 women had long term training and 12 had short term training. These data indicate that female workers lack the advantages and benefits created by broad training. They were not allowed to gain advanced technologies or meet people from different cultures. In addition, they lacked training facilities inside the country in addition to other constraints, including the application of migration rules and regulations that restrict the mobility of females without Mohrim (blood relative).

Table 4.14

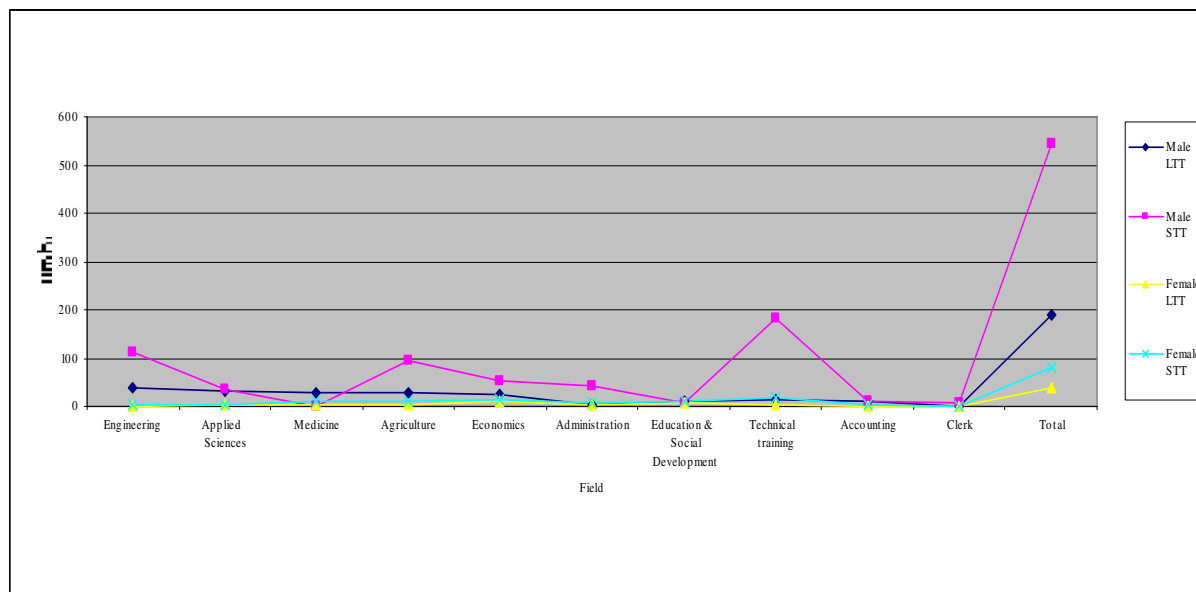
Training Abroad by Gender, 1998

Field of Training	Male training		Female training		Female training %	
	Long term	Short term	Long term	Short term	Long term	Short term
Engineering	39	112	0	3	0	2.7
Applied Sciences	32	35	4	2	11.4	2.7
Medicine	27	0	5	10	15.6	100
Agriculture	28	94	2	12	6.6	11.3
Economics	26	53	9	13	25.7	19.6
Administration	4	41	2	8	33.3	16.3
Education & Social Development	10	8	8	12	44.4	60
Technical training	14	182	5	16	26.3	8.1
Accounting	9	11	1	5	10	31.2
Clerk	0	7	0	0	0	0
Total	189	543	39	81	17.1	13

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Khorasani 1999: 125)

Diagram 4.13

Training Abroad by Gender, 1998



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Khorasani 1999: 125)

In conclusion, there is a wide gender gap in short term training abroad, 543 males and 81 females. There is also a wide gender gap in long term training abroad, 189 males and 39 females. Males dominated long term training abroad for the Engineering sector, 39 while no females received this training, also for the Applied Science sector, 32 males and only 4 females received training. Males also dominated short term training abroad for the Engineering sector, 112 males and 3 females (3) received training. For the Agriculture sector, 49 males and 12 females received training. In Education & Social Development and Medicine, females dominated the short term training, while males dominated long term training. In short term training, the gender gap is wide in the Engineering and Agriculture sectors. In long term training, the gender gap is wide in Engineering and Applied Science. Thus, male dominated Engineering in both short and long term training abroad has a wide gender gap, followed by Agriculture and Applied Science. Although many females work in the Clerk sector, women are not given any opportunity to be trained abroad either long or short term while males did get short term training abroad.

.2.2. Labour laws deficiency

In theories women labourers have been recognized by the labour laws but the gains and benefits achieved by women are still very little and there are some weaknesses in the application of these laws that need to be revised immediately:

- Laws do not give mothers the full rights of delivery leave where there are suitable work conditions for women workers that include nurseries, kindergarten, transport and other necessary facilities. It is important to mention that Sudan did not sign the international agreement No. 1 issued on 29/10/1959 which stipulated that a woman worker is eligible to get six months delivery leave with payment to meet her and her child's expenses. The cost should be recovered from the country's general resources or the special insurance system. Also the agreement provides a maternity leave for one hour per day to breastfeed a child. This one hour is in the general labour law but does not exist in the private sector, individual labour relations law.
- There are some negative aspects of the labour laws of the private sector related to the family, in particular, the right to get allowances for children and substitution of leave in

case of joining her in her duty station. Married women do not enjoy these rights as the men do. This is due to the male legislator's view toward male workers as breadwinners for their families. This should be considered as a great violation of the labour laws of equal payment. In addition, this contradicts the reality that women are working to satisfy the family's basic needs. In some cases the woman is head of the house due to unemployment of the husband, his absence or sickness. In all cases, both the wife's and husband's salary is not enough to feed the family members under these economic conditions.

- Transfer for the Al Salih Al Amm has been stipulated in the general labour law 1973 Item (No.22-7), and the general labour law 1994 Items (No. 50 D & 52-1). It is possible to terminate the officer's services and transfer him/her to pension services for the general sake of work without any warning. These reasons are usually personal such as one can be transferred for being a trade union member or for one's political affiliation. Trade unions have been struggling to cancel this transfer for the general sake of work but have failed to do so. This transfer creates work instability and thousands of the qualified and experienced officers have been fired. (Khorasani, 1999:112).
- The legislatures of general labour laws neglect the women in the traditional sector of economy and concentrate on women workers in urban areas. Rural women working in traditional sectors of agriculture, grazing and services are not included in these general labour laws; therefore, they are not protected. They are exploited because they work in conditions that undervalue traditional women workers and they are viewed as ignorant women.
- There is a lack of supervision and follow up apparatus to apply these labour laws and to judge the realities of women's working conditions.

The literature and studies about the application of the labour laws showed that Sudanese women made slight gains in the field of labour law, education and training, but still their work conditions are poor due to violation of their rights through the failure to uphold the labour laws.

- **Impact of strategies adopted to alleviate poverty**

- • **Introduction to the structural adjustment strategies**

The information about this part of the structural adjustment policies derives from three sources. The first two are the Ministry of Manpower Surveys (MMSs) carried out by the Ministry of Manpower in 1990 and 1996. Both surveys were restricted to the north of Sudan. The former was based on a much larger sample (7,400 households) than the latter (3,400 households). In principle, the surveys are expected to generally reflect employment characteristics in organised economic activity. It is very likely, as a result, that the surveys underestimate the participation of women and children in informal economic activity especially in the countryside.

However, the third source of data is obtained from the survey conducted by the Ministry of Health, Safe Motherhood Survey (SMS) (1999) in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). It provides statistical data about the female labour force at the state level, including informal economic activities and it classifies occupations as traditional, transitional and modern. The SMS was implemented in 1999 and covered the whole country of Sudan, not like the MMS's previous two surveys that cover the north only. The information is also representative and based on a sample consisting of 17,000 households. More socioeconomic data is needed at state and household levels to fill the data gap about the female labour force for the purposes of this study.

These three MMSs are considered reliable official data that provide information dealing with policies at the national level. The impact of these sets of policies, especially their impact on the female entrepreneurs of this study, will reflect the poverty situation as will be seen in chapters seven and eight. The impact of the structural adjustment policies can be classified in terms of economic impact and social impact.

The performance of the economy and the crisis of poverty in Sudan have been traced back to the 1970s when Sudan adopted export led agro-industrial strategy or bread basket strategy to restructure the export sector. This was accomplished by concentrating on agro-industrial

production of food, sugar, textiles and meat for export that assist in the promotion of import substitution to reduce imports. The bread basket strategy is based on the belief that Sudan could, given adequate financial support, develop its vast untapped agricultural resources to provide food security for the Middle East through a combination of Arab funds and Western technology, (Ibrahim, 1992:10). This highly ambitious programme led to huge inflows of capital, mainly from Arab states through bilateral agreements. As a result of increased government expenditures Ibrahim (1992:10) also said that the economy was in crisis by the end of the 1970s due to the budget deficit which rose by almost 100%. The balance of payments deficit increased from 2 to 5 per cent of GDP exports fell from 15 per cent to 11 per cent of GDP and real growth rates started to decline (Ibrahim1992:10). The inflow of capital from oil-rich Arab countries decreased, and as the grace periods of the loans reached their end, a severe economic crisis emerged.

After 1978, Arab oil-producing countries started to make fund disbursements to Sudan subject to IMF/World Bank conditions. The deterioration of the economy continued during the 1980s and the 1990s, after the liberalisation strategy, which was pursued starting in 1992. These programmes of the liberalisation strategy were aimed at improving the current account and reducing debt, attracting foreign capital and foreign investment, increasing capacity utilisation, reducing the rate of inflation, and promoting economic growth. However, through 1985, the final outcome of these policy packages was stagnation in exports, increase in imports, deterioration in the trade balance and the balance of payments, accumulation of foreign debt, soaring inflation rates, loss of purchasing power, and increased poverty. In this concern the Sudan UNDP R (1998:10) indicated that the economic situation is not that much better than it was in the late 70s and early 80s (UNDP 1998:10). The country's account balance of payments deficit had reached over 800 million. According to Abdel Ati and El Tybe (2005:2), foreign loans, far from solving economic problems, have themselves become an additional problem by causing a reduction in public expenditure. They stated that Sudan's external debts had grown to USD 24 billion, by the end of 1999, a rise of 77.4% over ten years, with a massive annual debt service of over USD 1.3 billion (Abdel Ati & El Tybe 2005:2).

. 2 Economic impact

. 2. Wages

Based on the 1990 and 1996 Migration and Labour Force Survey, the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) (1997) also examined the trend and profile of poverty in Sudan over the two periods 1990 and 1996. It is observed that between 1990 and 1996 the income poverty lines increased at unprecedented rates from Sudanese Pound (Ls.) 9,624.32 to Ls.420715.79, i.e. at over 610% per annum, for urban areas and from Ls. 4152.24 to Ls.284756.94, i.e. at 96% per annum, for rural areas. The results of the 1996 survey provide further evidence that poverty in Sudan had become a widespread phenomenon, regardless of the characteristics of the poor and the mode of living.

One of the economic impacts of structural adjustment is the decline in the wages of the labourers and sometimes the freezing of wages for many months. In this respect, Easterly and Sewadeh (2002:38) indicated that the 1996 Manpower Survey results show that only 35.8% were working for a wage. Those working for a wage in the urban sector accounted for 71.9% of the employed urban labour force while those in the rural sector accounted for 19.5% of the employed rural labour force. The average monthly wage in 1996 amounted to Ls. 26,320 in the rural sector, equivalent to US 19.60, and Ls. 50,024 in the urban sector, equivalent to US 37.30, thus implying differences in urban-rural wage per month. Note that the average wage rate in the rural sector was below the international poverty line of US 30 per person per month while in the urban areas it is slightly above this benchmark. These estimates are reasonable compared to the wage rates in the government sector in 1996. Thus, according to the Manpower Survey (1996: 36-37), the highest monthly wage in the government sector, after taking into account all types of allowances, amounted to Ls 70,575, equivalent to US 52.60, while the lowest monthly wage amounted to Ls.13,330, equivalent to US 8.10.

If the 1996 highest monthly wage were counted per day, it would be equal to 2,352.5 Ls, equivalent to US 1.75. This low wage is not only for the survival of one person, but for at least three to seven persons in the family. And the lowest monthly wage per day would be equal to 444.3 Ls, US 0.27. Again, this much lower wage is not only for the survival of one person but

for at least three to seven persons in the family. There is also evidence that over time real wages have declined. These estimates are critical for policy makers since they answer the key policy questions of how many people are poor, how far below the poverty line their incomes fall, the duration of the period after they became poor, and whether their poverty is transient or long-run.

This situation of reduction of the household income has encouraged women to find work in the informal sector in order to maintain their families' standard of living.

The impact of the decrease in wages due to structural adjustment and other economic policies at the household level shall be dealt with in detail in chapter eight.

. .2.2 Inflation

Another impact of the structural adjustment and liberalisation policies is inflation and high prices of goods. UNDP Report (1998:11) mentioned that the deterioration of the economic conditions and high debt led to inflation during the period 1979 – 1996. This has been clearly illustrated in Figure 4.1: attached to the Annex-1 page 439 Annual Inflation Rates (%). This data documented by the IMF, World Economic Outlook, October 1996, Greater Khartoum (Base Jan. 1990 = 100) by Central Bureau of Statistics, as reported in the National Council for Economic Planning (NCEP), Macroeconomic Performance Report, November 1997 (Quoted from UNDP Report 1998:11).

The UNDP report (1998:11) documented that greater Khartoum -Sudan, from 1971-1996 during the structural adjustment policies, witnessed a persistent high inflation driven by drastic deterioration of the value of the national currency in the context of economic stagnation. This undermined the productive capacity of Sudan's economy, particularly Sudan's economic output, which is critically dependent on imports. This breed of inflation contributes to the reproduction and resilience of poverty in the country.

From the vantage point of poverty, hyperinflation has been a prime shaper of economic performance and standard of living in Sudan. High levels of inflation devastate the standard of living of fixed income earners and receivers of rigid wages. In addition, inflation redistributes

income and wealth in favour of the rich and powerful. Large and widening disparity in income and wealth, it is now generally recognised, deters economic growth and development.

Annex-1: Figure 4.1 page 439 indicates that starting at the beginning of the 1970s, the cost of living in Greater Khartoum, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), rose to 10 times in 1983, to 100 times in 1989, to 1,000 times in 1993, to a staggering 5,000 times in 1995, and to an astounding 11,263 times by 1996. Thus, the purchasing power of the national currency was reduced, exponentially, to almost one twelve thousandth of its value over a quarter century. In other words, twelve thousand Sudanese pounds would be needed in 1996 to exercise the same command over commodities in the domestic economy as one pound did in the early 1970s.

Over the same quarter century, the exchange rate of the Sudanese pound against the US dollar plummeted by more than 5,000 times. The annual inflation rate also took a significant jump from 1988 to 1989 and hit triple digit levels during 1991-1994. Success in containing inflation in 1995, to the late 1980s level of less than 70%, was followed by the highest ever annual inflation rate of 135% in 1996.

The fact that per capita income increased from the equivalent of USD 284 in 1996 to USD 288 in 1999 is rather misleading, as the purchasing power of money has seriously deteriorated through high inflation. This has been supported by the WB mentioned that real salaries in the civil service have declined (WB2003:145).

Most of the families with bread winners employed in public sector suffered from escalating of good prices and the decline and freezing of wages and these serve as indicators of the deteriorating conditions of public sector employees and wage earners in general, explaining the exodus from the public sector to private sector. The income and resources of households, and of women in these households are affected by the increases of basic staple food by reduced subsidies, increases in the cost of exported goods and it became difficult to buy certain products for the well-being of the household and oblige members of the household to adjust their consumption habits by the modification in the consumption of their diet and consequently high rates of malnutrition especially among children as it will be discussed in this chapter.

However in 2000 after the SAP the inflation rate dropped substantially, from about 130 percent in 1996 to single digits in 2000 (WB2003:49)

. 2. Employment

WB (2003:145) indicates that the Unemployment rates tend to be higher for females than for males. However, the gender differential seems to have declined between 1990 and 1996. During 1990-1996, female unemployment declined from 33 percent to 22 percent in rural areas, and from roughly 36 percent to 34 percent in the urban areas. Comparatively, male unemployment did not change in rural areas (about 12 percent) but increased in urban areas from 10 to 15 percent in the same period (WB 2003:145). This gender gap between female and male has also been supported by the Human Development Report 2007/2008 which illustrates the gender inequality in economic activities for the year 2005 by indicating that the rate (%) of female economic activity (aged 15 and older) is equal to 23.7, as of male rate is equal to 33. Although there is variation in the statistical data Al though there is variation in the statistical data indicated by the HD report (2007) and the WB (2003) concerning women participation in the economic activities still gender variation between male and female in the participation in the economic activities.

With declining real wages and limited size of labour markets, one would have expected the labour market to achieve a high rate of unemployment, especially among female workers. However, the Ministry of Labour (1996) stated that the rate of unemployment increased from about 5.5% in 1973 to 16.6% in 1996, recording an annual rate of increase of 5.2 percent Ministry of Labour (1996: xiii).

As indicated in Figure 4.2 attached to the Annex-1 page 440, and as reported by the UNDP report (1998) the Ministry of Manpower statistics (1996), the participation in economic activity is estimated to reach 40 + %, and the labour force is estimated to have grown from about 6 million to almost 8 million within the six-year period. The majority of the labour force resides in rural areas. During the period 1990-1996 males' participation in the labour force was higher than females' participation in both rural and urban areas. However, rural females' participation is higher than urban females' participation in the labour force. In both rural and urban areas there is

noticeable increase in females' participation in labour force. Urban males' participation in labour force shows there is no increase in their participation during the six years while rural males' participation in labour force indicates slight increase. On the other hand, the SMS 1999 data on the female labour force indicates that the female labour participation in the labour force was varying between the states as indicated below.

Table 4.15

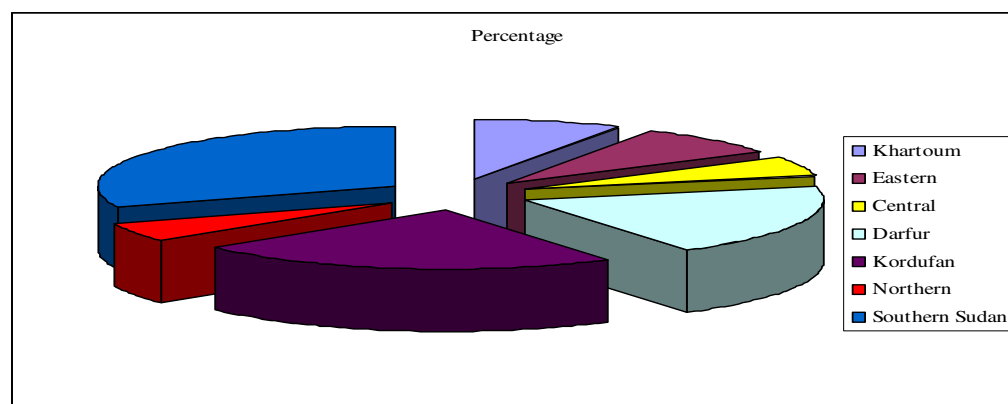
Percentage of Female participation in
Labour Force 1999

States	Percentage
Khartoum	12.5
Eastern	12.2
Central	8.4
Darfur	30.1
Kordufan	35.9
Northern	7.6
Southern Sudan	47.6

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SMS 1999:6)

Diagram 4.14

Percentage of Female Participation in the Labour Force, 1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SMS 1999:6)

Table 4.15 and Diagram 4.14 represent that the lowest rate of female participation was reported in Northern state (7.6%), where as the highest rate was reported in Southern Sudan state, 47.6%, followed by Darfur, 35.9%, and Kordufan, 30.1%. In Darfur and Kordufan, the prevailing mode of production is traditional, and the cultural background doesn't restrict participation of females in the labour force. The rate of female participation in the capital city of Khartoum is moderate, 12.5%. This can be attributed to the availability of paid work. In Eastern state, where two modes of production exist, modern and traditional, female participation rates are also moderate (15.2%).

Increasing rates of unemployment in Sudan during the structural adjustment policies for the period 1990-1996 can be clearly illustrated in Annex -1 Figure 4.3 page 441, which indicates that about 17% of the labour force was estimated to be unemployed, corresponding to 1 million in 1990 and rising to 1.3 million in 1996. Females are estimated to have suffered higher rates of unemployment throughout the period but the gender differential is estimated to have declined between 1990 and 1996. Unemployment in urban areas appears to have been solidifying. Over the six-year period, urban areas replaced the countryside as the higher unemployment locale and greater among females than males. Nevertheless, rural areas continued to hold the majority of unemployed persons in the country. Throughout the period, however, urban females experienced the highest unemployment rates in the four-way gender and rural/urban residence classification. In this concern the SMDGs R (2005:15) mentioned that in northern the gap was evident in both urban and rural areas: in urban areas, the unemployment rate of women was 33% compared with 15% for men; in rural areas the corresponding rates were 21% compared to 12% of male counterparts (SMDGs R 2005:15)

Figure 4.3 attached to the Annex-1 page 441, explains the structure of employment by branch of economic activity, gender and residence, revealing a traditional economy of agriculture sector in 1996, the rural labour force is dominated by agricultural occupations, 70% of males and 87% of females. The only other occupational category of note for rural males is Services, at slightly less than 10% of the labour force. The urban occupational structure is much more varied, establishing a sharp dichotomy between urban and rural economies. Prominent occupations for males are Services, 24%, and Trade, 21%. Important occupational categories for females are Professionals, 29%, with more than five times the share of the professional category in the entire labour force,

and, expectedly, Clerks, 21%. Thus, women in urban areas seem to enjoy a relatively superior occupational structure.

On the other hand, the SMS 1999 sheds more light on the female labour force and classifies it as modern, transitional and traditional and by state as indicated in Table 4.16 and Diagram 4.15 and Table 4.17 and Diagram 4.15 below.

Table 4.16

Type of Female Labour Force

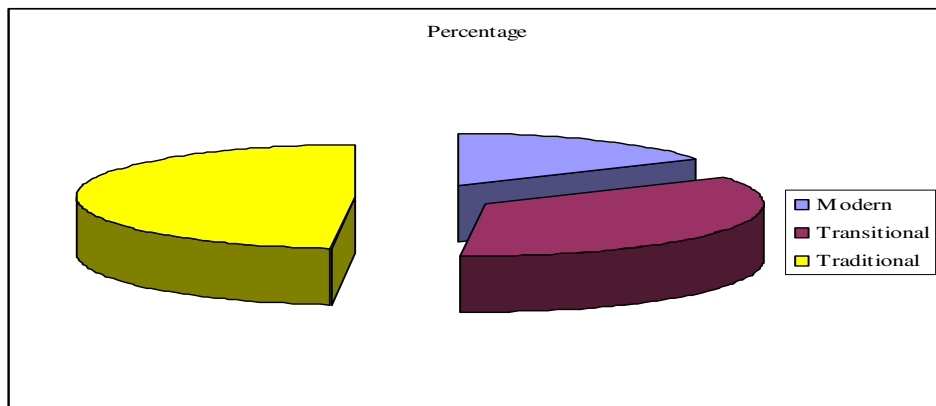
Occupations, 1999

Type	Percentage
Modern	18.1
Transitional	38.5
Traditional	53.3

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SMS1999:6)

Diagram 4.15

Type of Female Labour Force Occupations, 1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SMS 1999:6)

Diagram 4.15 above shows the highest percentage of female participation in Sudan is in the traditional sector at 53.3%, followed by transitional sector at 38.5% and, finally, the modern sector at 18.1%.

Table 4.17

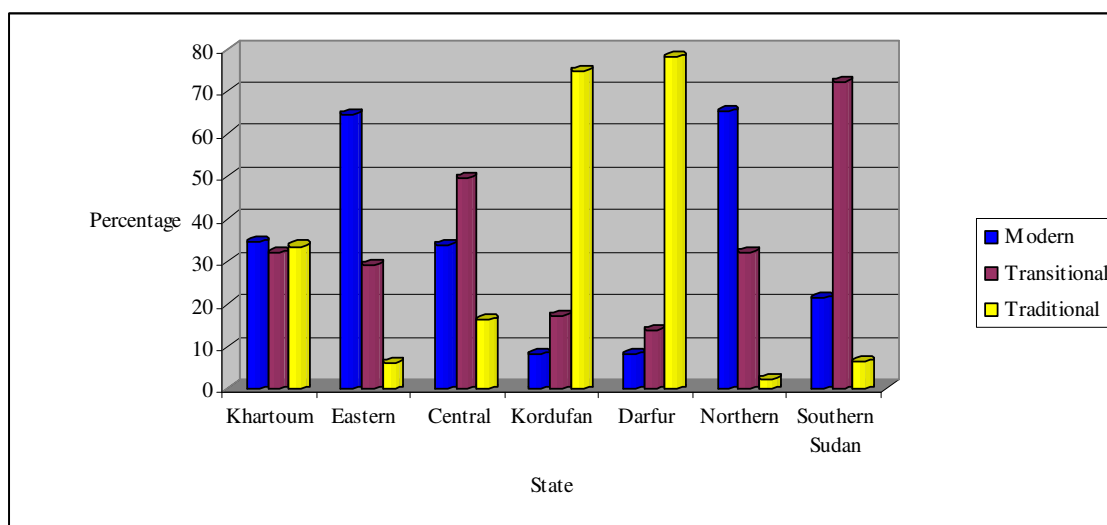
Percentage Distribution of Type of Occupation by State of Residence, 1999

State	Modern	Transitional	Traditional
Khartoum	34.5	32	33.6
Eastern	64.6	29.3	6.1
Central	34	49.7	16.3
Kordufan	8	17.2	74.8
Darfur	8	13.9	78.1
Northern	65.3	32.3	2.4
Southern Sudan	21.3	72.3	6.4

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SMS 1999:10)

Diagram 4.16

Percentage Distribution of Type of Female Occupation by Stat of Residence,1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SMS 1999:6)

The following Table 4.17 and Diagram 4.16 above indicate that, in our study areas of Khartoum state, most of the working women are in the modern sector, 34.5 %, and the fewest are in the traditional sector, 32%. Most of the working women in the Kordufan states are working in the traditional sectors, 74.8 %, and the lowest are those working in modern sector, 8%. The impact of the mode of production on occupational structure is clear in Sudan. In Kordufan, where the mode of production is traditional, women work in traditional occupations, whereas in Khartoum the prevalent mode is modern and women work in modern occupations.

Concerning the state of residence, there is a negative correlation between being in the North, East and Khartoum states and the probability of participation in the labour force. The correlation is statistically significant for Eastern and Northern states. On the other hand, there is a statistically significant positive correlation between being in Darfur, Kordufan and Southern Sudan and the probability of work. Rather say something like: UNDP statistics (UNDP1998:385) indicate that the age pattern of unemployment in 1996 is such that the youngest members of the labour force suffer the highest rates of unemployment. The rates decline with age to reach a minimum in the forties, and then start to mount again to above average levels, especially for males. As well as lack of job opportunities, the prevalence of high unemployment rates at old age is a sign of widespread poverty for more details see Annex – 1 Figure 4.4 page 442.

According to Figure 4.5 attached to the Annex-1 page 443 and as it is indicated by UNDP report (1998:385) unemployment rates do not vary much by educational attainment except for females, among whom unemployment rises with education up to the intermediate level. The unemployment rate of female graduates of primary and intermediate education is more than three times the national rate. However, since females constitute a minority of the labour force, their pattern of unemployment by educational attainment is not reflected in the overall relationship.

Among males, the highly educated have slightly higher unemployment rates. That illiterates suffer relatively high unemployment rates indicates a generalised lack of employment opportunities.

. 2. Migration

According to the Ministry of Manpower (MOM) the 1996 survey incidence of poverty in urban areas decreases with the incidence of migration among household working members, reaching its lowest level of 62.5% for households with migration incidence of 50% or more. However, for rural households with migration incidence exceeding 50% among working members, the incidence of poverty starts to rise (MOM 1997:43). This may be attributed to the decline in production following the migration of a larger proportion of working household members. In other words returning migrants in urban areas contribute in alleviating poverty of their households only temporarily since some of them remain unemployed or underemployed, and their savings fall gradually and poverty incidence starts to rise. Given the fact that the unemployment rate has increased at a rate of 5.2 per cent per annum over the period 1973-1996, this can be taken as a failure of the growth process to generate sufficient employment opportunities to absorb returned migrants. It has been mentioned that The failure of economic growth to bring about a pattern of development in which all areas, sectors, and groups of people have equitable shares is a key factor in explaining migration (Ali 1999a:13).

A response to the then emerging economic crisis was undertaken by individuals in the form of migration to the Gulf oil producing countries. As a result of the first oil price increase these countries started ambitious development programmes and as such created a regional labour market to which labour flocked from all over the world. As would be expected, such an emigration process was highly selective in terms of educational levels, skill levels and age groups. Households were able to diversify their labour resources in order to minimise risk in unstable or poor economic environments. For example, a household might be able to allow one family member to receive advanced education, while sending another abroad to work in foreign labour markets. It was found that emigrants in Sudan tend to come from families with large numbers; where there is obviously less dependence on one source of income and the aforementioned survival strategy is used.

Sudan also suffers from rural-urban migration as a result of drought, desertification and civil war. Estimates of the 1993 Population Census conducted by Department of Statistics (1993) show that

25% of the population is urban. A male head of household significantly increases probability of migration by a member in that household. In the case of Sudanese migration, 72% of migrants in 1990 were male, 64% of these migrants were between the ages of 25-59. Interestingly, most male migrants were employed, 53%, while most, 65%, of female migrants were non-economically active. Also, there is a higher proportion of unmarried migrants than of married migrants among men; 22 percent of male migrants were married before they left the country and 59 percent of female migrants were married before they left.

The occupational distribution of migrants is visible in the figure below. The number of Sudanese changing residence has climbed from 1.3 million in 1983 to 3.4 million in 1993, 16 percent of the total population. The urban population has also risen from 20.5% in 1983 to 29.2% in 1993. Significantly, Kordufan, Darfur and the Northern states of Sudan have seen continued net losses in population, while the state of Khartoum has seen continued growth. According to the 1993 population census, population in Khartoum has doubled ten times from what it was in 1956, while the population in other major cities increased four to seven times. Sudan has also been a host to refugees from neighbouring countries for about a quarter of a century because of civil wars, drought and famine. Total refugees are now estimated to be over a million, 50% of whom do not receive assistance from the UN (Republic of the Sudan, 1997). Recent statistical evidence of the Department of Statistics (Quoted by the Republic of the Sudan, 1997) shows that the urban population of the country is 32%, 43% of them living in the capital, Khartoum.

The earlier labour migration was characterised by its temporary nature. As reported by the female entrepreneurs from the areas for our study samples, the presence of children and elderly people creates pressure on limited household resources and, thus, serves as a push to migrate. First, as a survival strategy, their husbands tend to keep moving regularly between urban wage employment in Khartoum and Omdurman and their home agricultural areas in Kordufan and other parts of Sudan. Many were involved in seasonal movements to agriculture areas, particularly to Kordufan. However, during the 1960s and 1970s the nature of urban migration began to change. Migrant husbands became increasingly dependent on wage employment in Khartoum and began to bring family members with them. This phenomenon was reflected in the increase in permanent residence of migrant workers in the Khartoum towns which of course resulted in increased

pressure on urban land and services. As migration significantly increased, both in terms of internal shifts and in terms of international migration, population mobility has become an important issue for policy-makers and others. Knowledge of the specific characteristics of migrant populations enables governments and aid organisations to better serve their constituencies. Specifically, it is important that policy makers understand the factors pushing people out of certain areas as they create new development strategies

. .2. Female headed households

The Migration and Labour Force Survey, Ministry of Manpower (MOM) (1996) as shown in Table 4.18 attached to the Annex-1 page 428 on the reports of poverty indices for 1990 and 1996, poverty can be illustrated by the following characteristics: the heads of poor households, region of residence; gender; sector of employment, agriculture, industry, services; and mode of living, rural or urban .

SMDGs R (2005) mentioned that Women head about 27% of households (SMDGs R 2005:12). However the proportions vary between urban and rural areas as well as between regions and the incidence, depth and severity of poverty vary between male and female headed household. From the Table 4.18 attached to the Annex-1 page 428 it is clear that between 1990-1996 poverty incidence, depth and severity increased dramatically in the rural areas of all regions. These results support the contention that adjustment and liberalisation policies have hit the rural poor hard. The results also indicate that between 1990 and 1996 the incidence of poverty among male-headed and female-headed households in urban areas has not exhibited a significant change. For rural areas, however, the increase in poverty was dramatic. Thus, for male-headed households the incidence of poverty increased from 65.3% in 1990 to 94.3% in 1996, while it increased from 82.8% to 89.9% for female-headed households. MOM (19996) explained this little increase of incidence of poverty among women seizing the self-employment opportunities that women have created for themselves in the tertiary sector in the face of economic hardship, as well as by the built-in social solidarity system which provides help for the needy, particularly women.

Over time, as adjustment and liberalisation policies started to hit hard on almost every household, a significant increase is observed in both the depth and severity of poverty for all poor households in rural areas. Again, this result confirms an earlier observation that the rural poor, especially women, have borne the brunt of adjustment and liberalisation measures.

Also Table 4.18 attached to the Annex-1 page 428 suggests that, irrespective of the economic sector where the head of household is employed, the incidence of poverty among urban households remained almost the same between 1990 and 1996, while it increased significantly among rural households. The hardest hit in this respect were households headed by employees in the agricultural sector in rural areas, among whom the incidence of poverty increased from 63.8% in 1990 to 94.5% in 1996. For the same group, the depth and severity of poverty also increased dramatically between 1990 and 1996, from 33.11% to 74.13%, and from 22.60% to 62.35%, respectively.

Distribution of the poor female headed households by state were calculated by Al Awad and Khalafallah indicating that in Great Kordufan there were 11.2 thousand female headed households living in urban areas compared to 19 thousand living in rural areas. In Khartoum state there were 33.7 thousand female headed households in urban areas and 34 thousand in rural areas (Al Awad and Khalafallah 2001:7). The poor female headed households were concentrated in rural areas in Darfur as indicated in Table 4.19 below.

Table 4.19

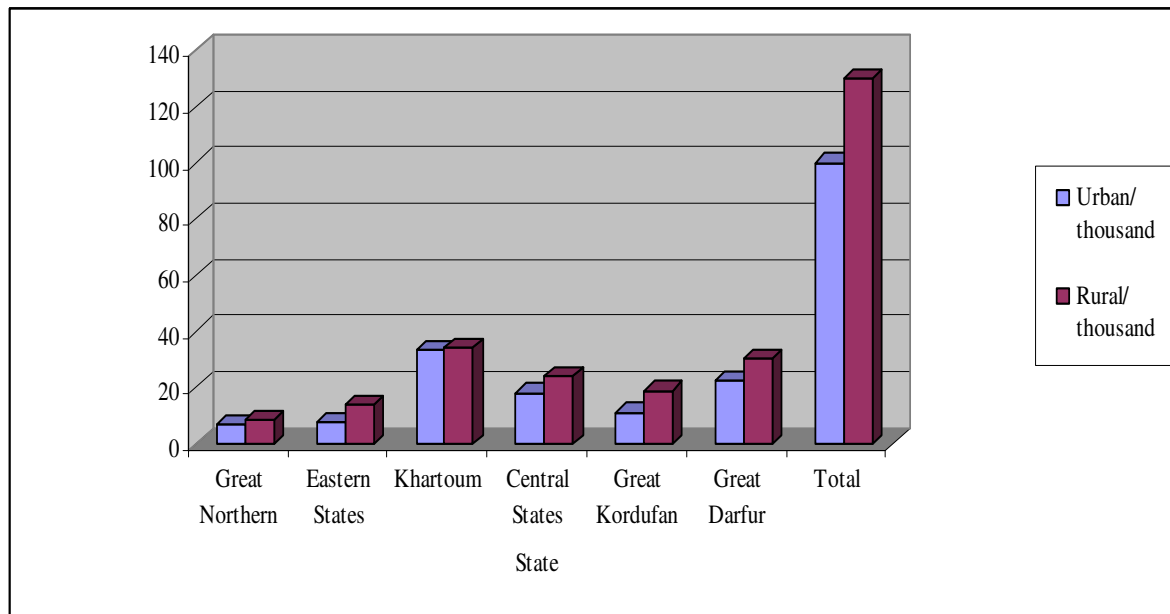
Distribution of Poor Female Headed Households,
Northern Sudan

Place of Residence	Urban/ thousand	Rural/ thousand
Great Northern	6.8	8.7
Eastern States	7.4	14.2
Khartoum	33.7	34
Central States	18.2	24
Great Kordufan	11.2	19
Great Darfur	22.7	30
Total	100	129.9

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad and Khalafallah 2001:7).

Diagram 4.17

Distribution of Poor Female Headed Households, Northern Sudan



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad and Khalafallah 2001:7)

Concerning gender inequality Nur (1997) concludes that in rural and urban areas, inequality within the female-headed households is greater than inequality within the male-headed households and that consumption level in the former group is higher than in the later . In addition, 'difference in the sex of the head of household contributes almost nothing to overall expenditure inequality in Sudan. Only 0.08-0.23 percent of overall inequality is due to gender difference implying that female-headed households are about as well off as male-headed households' (Nur 1997 quoted in UNDP 1998:50).

As well, the Ministry of Manpower's analysis of the 1996 MMS (1997) concludes 'the gender of the head of household is not a significant determinant of the probability of poverty, with the exception of rural areas in 1996 where a household headed by a male is more likely to be poor than one headed by a female' (MMS 1997 quoted in UNDP 1998:50). The paper also points out that personal income tends to be more unequally distributed in women-headed households than men-headed households.

. 2. Entrepreneurship

According to the Bank of Sudan (BOS) (2000:10) Sudan's industrial sector constitutes not less than 5 per cent of the total labour force, and about 8 per cent of GDP and less than 1 per cent of the total exports mainly semi-processed goods (BOS 2000:10). Among the industrial sub-sectors in Sudan are small-scale industries defined by the total employment of less than 25 workers. According to Ibrahim (2002:14) the informal sector first appeared in the 1970s, following a huge migration influx from rural to urban areas as the result of unequal development, wars and drought. In this concern Idris and al-Faki (1993:15) stated that the role of women in the informal sector was estimated to be 12 per cent in 1993, up from 2.9 per cent in 1990 (Idris, & al-Faki, 1993:15). Easterly and Sewadeh (2002:38) stated that one of the important features of the labour market is that 84.1% of total employed labour was found to be working in establishments of very small size (Easterly & Sewadeh 2002:38). According to Easterly & Sewadeh (2002:38) very small size establishment can be defined by employing between 1 and 9 workers. Employment in small enterprises employing with 10 to 29 workers accounted for 7.8% of the total. Employment in medium sized enterprises which consist of 30-49 workers accounted for 1.2% and that in large enterprises employing 50 workers and more accounted for 7% of the total. In urban areas very small enterprises accounted for the employment of 65.8% of the urban employed labour force, while small, medium and large enterprises accounted for 15.2%, 3.2% and 15.8% respectively. In the rural areas very small enterprises accounted for the employment of 91.8% of the employed rural labour force with small, medium and large enterprises accounting for 4.5%, 0.4% and 3.3% respectively.

As shall be seen in the following chapter the poverty reduction strategy (1992-2002) and through the implementation of the social mobilisation for solidarity and production development services programmes have been directed toward poor families to mitigate economic difficulties. Many families have moved toward home based enterprises to create income and find employment opportunities. This discussion on female headed households and poverty has also brought issues of 'power' and 'empowerment' to the fore. It has stressed how the capacity to command and allocate resources is as important as the power to obtain resources and that there is no simple, linear relationship between access to material resources and female empowerment.

. . Social impact

This section will illustrate the social impact of the SAP and the social phenomenon created accordingly. This is dated back to 1980s and 1990s when structural adjustment and liberal restructuring policies, cut-backs in state services and subsidies that resulted in reductions in public healthcare, education, water provision, declining investments in housing and infrastructure, inflation and rising prices of basic food stuffs. It was women and children who largely footed the bill'. The decline and freezing of wages and shortfalls in household income required greater effort in domestic provisioning which gave women heavier burdens in their homes and communities.

. . . Homeless children

Working children constitute 10% the total labour force and 24% of the total child population. Another social phenomenon, closely linked to child labour, is child vagrancy and homelessness. Available figures suggest some 66,000 children in Sudan are living in the streets, a rise of 5.4% between 1996 and 1999 this number is estimated to have risen by 13.9% in 2002 (Abdel Ati and Eltayeb 2005:2).

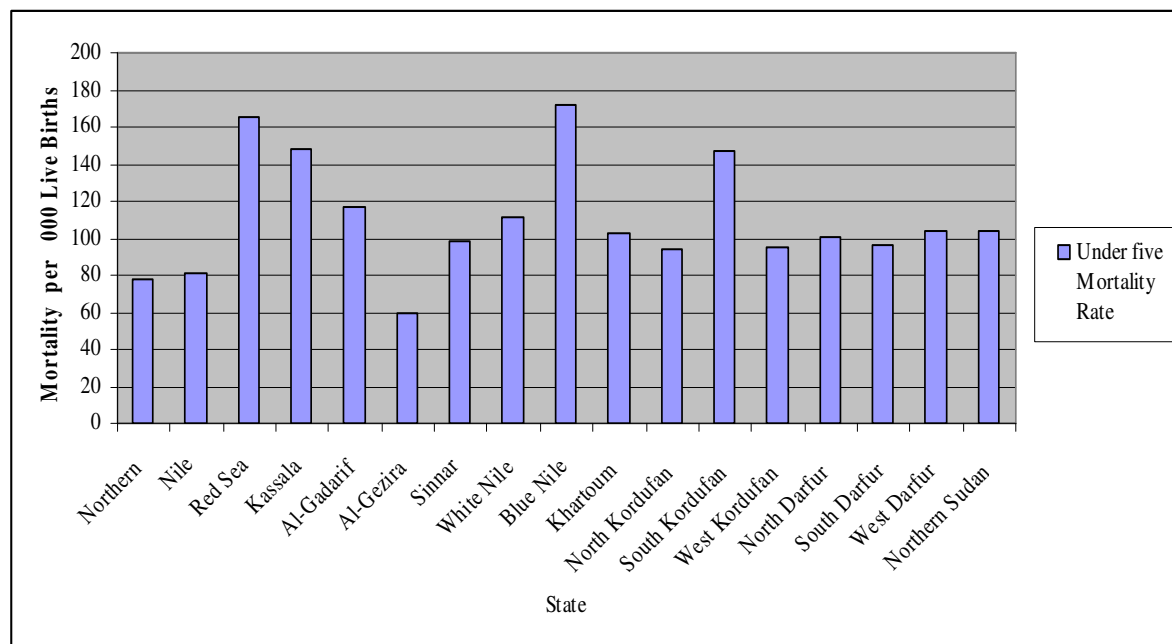
. . .2 Morbidity and mortality

One of the main challenges facing the health sector is that the Government health expenditure is, very low. Over the period 1998-2000, the total expenditure on the health and population sector was in the range of 0.7% to 0.9% of GDP – and between 5.4% and 8.5% of total government expenditure. In 2000 this is translated into just 2.5 per capita (SMDGs R 2005: 18). Therefore Overall there has been little improvement in MDGs related health indicators since 1990 (SMDGs R 2005: 18). This little improvement has been supported by the Human Development Report 2007/2008 (2007) which mentioned that infant mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) was 104 in 1970, and was 62 in 2005 and under-five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) was 172 in 1970 and 90 in 2005. This information indicates that there is decline in the infant mortality rate.

This fact is also supported by the data compiled from SMS (1999), MIC (2000), and (WB: 2003) as indicated in Table 4.20 attached to the Annex-1 page 429 shows some indicators of improvement, but geographic disparities are also wide. Average under-five mortality declined from 123 per 1,000 live births in the early 1990s to 104 per 1,000 in 2000 in Northern Sudan. Basic health indicators, especially under-five mortality, are among the worst in Blue Nile, 172, Red Sea, 165, Kassala, 148, and Southern Kordufan, 147. Diagram 4.18 below, developed from Table 4.20 attached to the Annex-1 page 429 illustrates the under-five mortality rate by state.

Diagram 4.18

Infant and Child Mortality (per 1,000 live births), 2000



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (MICS quoted in WB: 2003:9)

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey (MICS) 2000 found that there are 5 leading diseases that cause a high rate of under-five mortality. These are malaria, pneumonia, diarrhoea, nutritional deficiency and septicaemia have a combined morbidity rate of 20.2% higher than the national rate, and more than 64% higher than the overall rate. Thus there is heavy burden of disease among children and the prospects for reducing infant, child, and maternal mortality are not good. It is estimated that 63 % of deaths among children

under five are caused by pneumonia 26 %, malaria 21%, diarrhoea 9 percent, and malnutrition 7 percent. The remaining causes in order of importance are dehydration, respiratory diseases, anaemia, septicaemia, CSM, and viral hepatitis. Most of these diseases' care is highly correlated with household lifestyle, living conditions, and nutritional deprivation experienced by the poor households. Human Development report 2007/2008 (2007) indicated that only 50(% of children under five) during the period 1999-2005 Fevers treated with anti-malarial drugs.

Malnutrition is a major concern throughout Sudan, despite food aid and relief for young children aged 12-23 months. Young children were the most severely malnourished, close to 17%, with 12% severely malnourished. In rural areas, 12% were severely malnourished, with none only moderately malnourished. In urban areas, 16% were moderately and severely malnourished, but only 7% were severely malnourished. The incidence of malnourished among boys and girls was about the same. The worst states for severe malnourished were West Kordufan and North Darfur as these statistics reflects that these areas need great attention from the SWGU to assist in reducing incidents of malnutrition among young children. In addition SMDGs R (2005:19) emphasised that there are also serious problems of malnutrition: an estimated 18% of under-five children are moderately or severely malnourished – a proportion that reaches 27% in drought-affected areas (SMDGs R 2005:19). According to the SMDGs R (2005) in 2003 the majority of care takers were mothers (83%), unfortunately 42% of them had no education. Multiple strategies like women's education and empowerment are needed to foster public health interventions required to reduce child mortalities.

Malaria is the most serious health problem as indicated by the SMDGs R (2005:15) and in 2005 malaria produce around 7.5 million attacks of sickness and to kill around 35,000 people – 11 out of 10,000 and supported by the WB Report (2003) which indicates that more than 7 million cases of malaria occur annually. According to the WB 2003 malaria accounts for about 21% of all diseases seen at outpatient departments in health facilities throughout Sudan, ranging from 14% to 25% according to location. According to SMDGs R (2005:15) the rate was highest in Darfur region followed by Kordufan. In central and eastern regions the fatality levels remained stable over this period. Around 7% of deaths from malaria take place in hospital.

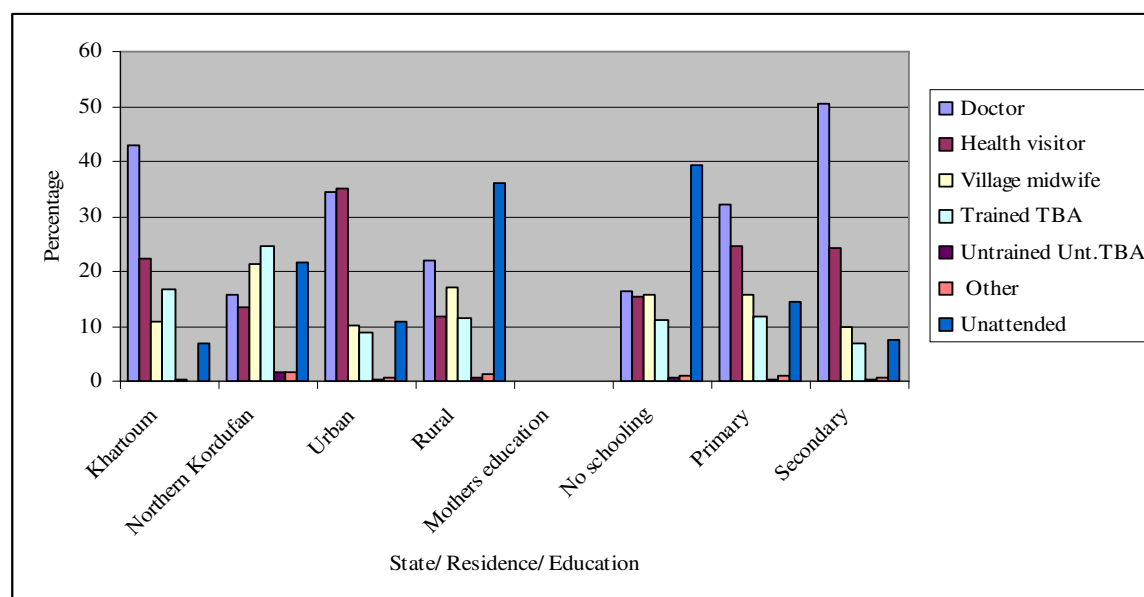
Malaria is also a major cause of child mortality. Sudan has associated itself with the global strategy for Malaria Control and has endorsed the international Roll Back Malaria (RBM) initiative as the organising principle for its own National Protocol and Treatment Plan for malaria. These figures only reflect the sick people who are admitted to hospitals and recorded. A large number of disease incidents are not reported because of geographical inaccessibility and lack of health awareness especially among poor women in rural areas.

Another negative impact of the SAP can be illustrated from the data from the SMS (1999), MICS (2000), (WB:2003) and the (SMDGs R 2005). As it is summarized by the SMDGs R (2005) since 2000, around five million children have received vitamin-A twice a year and in 2004 more than eight million children less than 15 years of age were vaccinated against measles. The impact of these public health interventions on child mortality and morbidity is well known to have positive impact on reducing child morbidity and hence mortality.

The last multiple cluster survey was in 2000 has showed very low measles coverage rate experienced in 1999. As indicated in Table 4.21 attached to the Annex-1 page 430 about the records vaccinations of children aged 12-23 months in Northern Sudan states to be a very low 26.4% of all children. The highest vaccination rate is recorded in Khartoum, 57.1%, and the lowest record is in West Darfur at 5.2%, while in North Kordufan it is 12.6%. The same statistics hold for children who have a health card, 51.6% in Khartoum and very 19.6% for Kordufan. This very low rate of vaccination is mainly attributed to the lack of vaccination centres and programmes that provide services to mothers and pregnant women. Health services do not reach Sudanese women in rural or urban areas, especially those who are poor and unable to pay for medical charges. As a result and according to the Human Development Report 2007/2008 (2007) one-year-olds fully immunized against tuberculosis (%) was 57% in 2005, Against measles (%)60%, Children with diarrhoea receiving oral re-hydration and continued feeding (% under age 5) during the period 1998 – 2005 is only 38%. due to the problems of lack of access, resources, and services. The information from SMS (1999), MICS (2000) and (WB:2003:13) show that there were few birth attendants for women giving birth in the year 2000 in Northern Sudan. Diagram 4.19 below is, created from Table 4.22 attached to the Annex-1 page 431 shows this information.

Diagram 4.19

Birth Attendants for Women Giving Birth for the
Year 1999 in Northern Sudan



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (MICS Quoted in WB 2003:13)

The diagram 4.19 above shows that the highest percentage was recorded to be 28.4% for women who are unattended and 26.7% for those attended with doctor. These are followed by health visitor 18.9%, village midwife 14.9%, trained TBA 10.6% and finally the lowest percentage is 0.5% for untrained TBA. Education level influences the level of attending which is highest among those mothers with secondary school who attend birth with doctor 50.6% and only 0.4% who attended with an untrained TBA.

A low percentage is recorded at 16.4% for uneducated mothers who go to the doctor and 39.5% of uneducated mothers are unattended. The same could be said for living in a rural area; the highest percentage, 36.1%, prefer not be attended and 22% are attended by doctors. The majority, 42.4%, prefer a health visitor, 11.8%, village midwife, 16.9%, or Trained TBA, 11.4%. Even for urban areas, the records indicate very low percentages of birth attendants for women giving birth; the highest percentage is equal to 35.2% for those attended by health visitors and only 34.4% attended by a doctor. The highest percentages for women in Khartoum were estimated for those females with a doctor, 42%, or health visitor, 22.3%, and the lowest percentage is 0.3%,

untrained TBA. While the picture is gloomier for women in Kordufan where the highest number is recorded for trained TBA, 24.7%, followed by those unattended, 21.7%, then 21.4% for health visitor and the lowest record is 1.6% with untrained TBA.

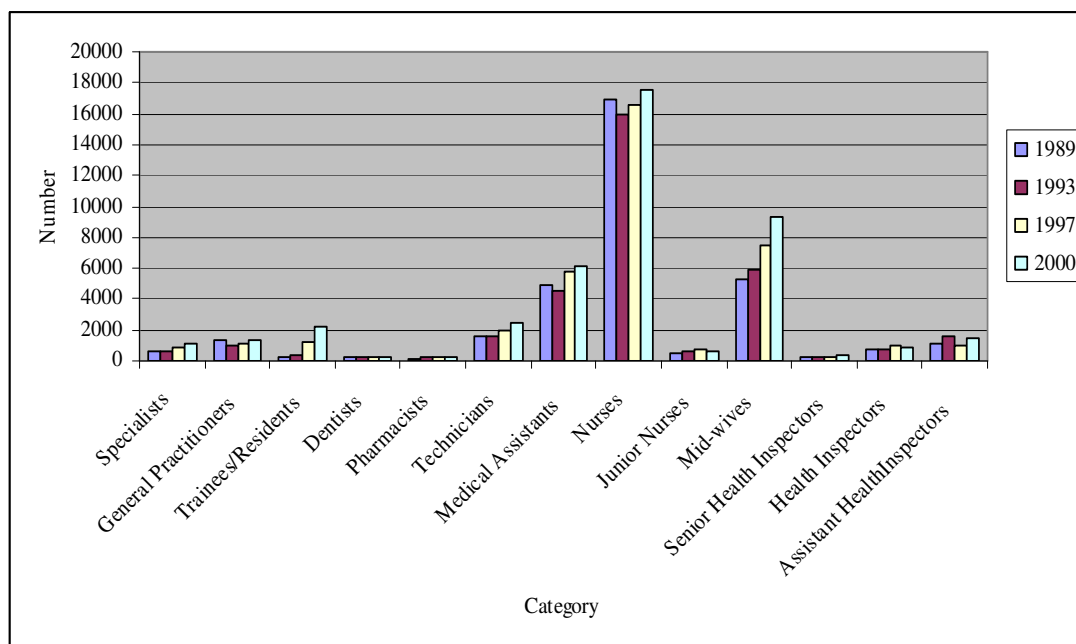
According to Human development Report 2007/2008 (2007) indicated that during the period 1997 – 2005 the percentage of the births attended by skilled health personnel is equal to 87 %. This indicates that the situation after the structural adjustment policies is improving.

According to the World Bank (2003:136), comparing the health situation of 1980s, it was found that access of the Sudanese households to basic health services deteriorated considerably during the 1990s. By all accounts, the public health care system is inefficient and good care in the private sector is expensive. As a result, those who can afford it go to countries such as Jordan to seek advice and treatment for chronic and acute health problems. Public primary health care clinics have proliferated, but a large proportion of them are not functioning because of lack of staff or medical supplies (WB2003:136) This lack of technical staff contributed to health services deterioration, especially primary health care facilities in addition to unavailability of funds to keep them operating. Health policies 1989 and 2000 were not having a great impact in increasing the medical and health staff in Sudan. The available data from the Ministry of Health indicates that the highest increase of medical and health staff during the period from 1989 to 2000 was recorded for Trainees/Residents equal to 87.6%. All other categories of staff record a very low percentage of increase. A negative change was recorded for medical assistants, -52%. Other negative changes were recorded for health workers, mainly general practitioners, 2.6%, nurses 3.3%, dentists 14.9%, junior nurses, 16%, assistant health inspectors, 23%,. For more details see Diagram 4.20 below:

Many people have no access to health institutions, particularly after the introduction of the cost recovery programme within the Structural Adjustment Policies capitalise throughout package that was implemented aggressively between 1996 and 1998.

Diagram 4.20

Medical and Health Staff Grouping 1989-2000 in Northern Sudan



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from the (Ministry of Health, quoted in WB 2003:18)

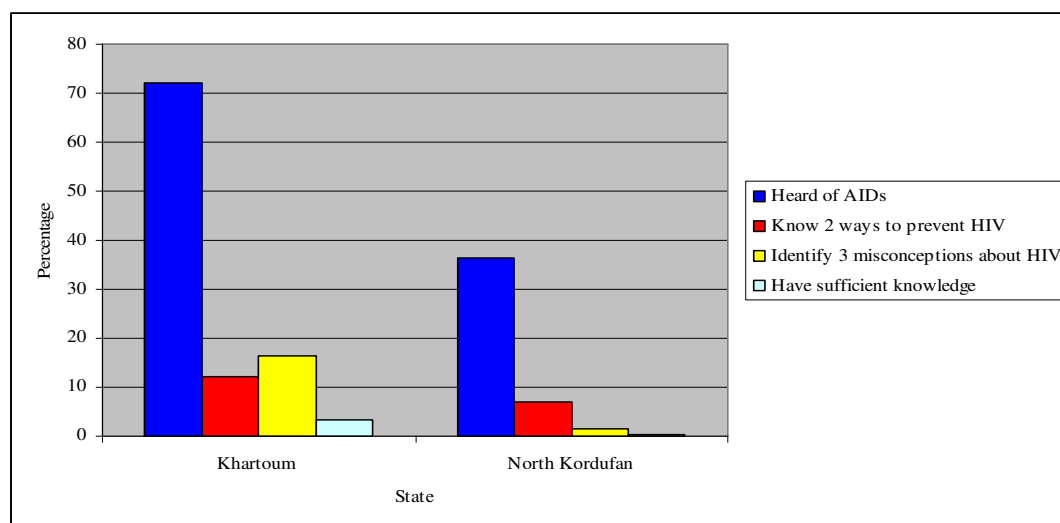
The incidence of HIV/AIDS was estimated by the Ministry of Health at about 1.6 percent in 2002. The same percent for the year 2005 is also reported by the Human Development Report 2007/2008.

Sudan is, however, highly vulnerable to the spread of HIV infection because of its proximity to countries that have a high incidence of infection and because of the large flow of people between these countries and Sudan. Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey, UNICEF (2000) points out low prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS in the northern parts of the country, but much higher in the war-affected areas in the south. The risk of HIV/AIDS explosion is particularly latent in the south close to high-risk neighbouring countries. This vulnerability is accentuated by inadequate understanding of the causes of HIV infections among the population. According to Abdel Ati and Eltayeb, diagnosed HIV/AIDS cases rose from two in 1986 to 2,607 in 1999 to 8,222 (4,190 confirmed AIDS cases, 4,032 HIV carriers) in April 2002. The average annual rate of increase

between 1996 and 1999 had been as high as 27% and the prevalence rate is now 1.6%. Over 71% of the diagnosed cases are males, of whom 93% are in the 15-49 year-age group, (Abdel Ati and Eltayeb 2005:3). The spread of AIDS, denied earlier, was officially recognised, and more recently the government formed a council entrusted with taking the necessary measures to combat the spread of AIDS. Promotion of safe sexual behaviour, awareness and education seems to be the most effective means of fighting the disease, but very little has yet been done in this respect. Women 15-49 years who have heard about HIV/AIDS vary between the states. The highest rate in Khartoum is 72%, while it is very low in North Kordufan at 36.3%. There are very few women with knowledge about HIV/AIDS, 3.2% in Khartoum and 0.4% in North Kordufan. The percentage of women with knowledge of how to prevent HIV/AIDS is very low in both states. In North Kordufan the percentage is 7% and in Khartoum is 12%. Diagram 4.21 below illustrates the very low awareness of women aged 15-49 about HIV/AIDS.

Diagram 4.21

Women aged 15-49 who have knowledge about HIV/AIDS



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (MICS Quoted in WB 2003:19)

. . . School dropout and absenteeism

Sudan's basic social services during the 1980s continued deteriorating and have had a serious detrimental impact on social welfare. Since 1994, the states have been responsible for education

at the basic and secondary level with support from the central Ministry of Education. The central government retains responsibility for diploma and higher education. Currently, there is a separate Ministry for Higher Education and Scientific Research, although before 1995 the responsibility for basic, secondary, and tertiary education was in the same ministry. There are numerous private educational institutions, including the traditional Koran schools, which operate at all levels including preschool.

As the analysis deals with poverty and the impact of socio-economic policies at the household level, the section below focuses on basic education.

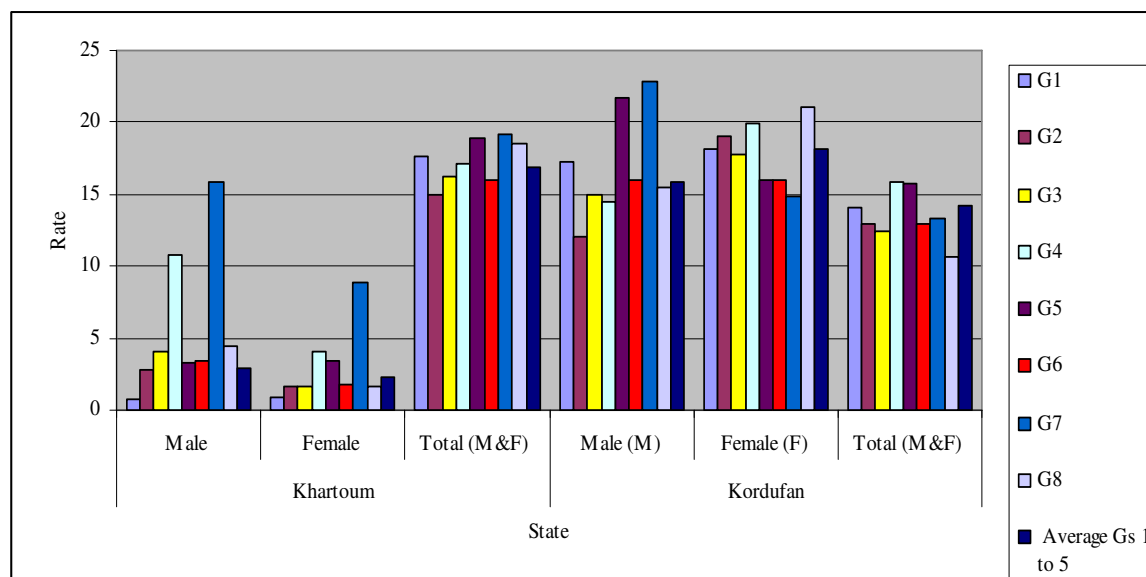
Based on the World Bank (2003:35) data on primary school enrolment Table 4.23 attached to the Annex-1 page 432 on measures of internal efficiency (1998, 1999) two important problems of student's repetition and dropout will be analysed. This indicates that there are major educational negative impacts of SAP. There are the high rates of dropout from the school and repetition. In total the highest dropout rate is 28.1% in Grade 8 and the highest repetition rate at 13.3% in Grade 7. The highest dropout among female students is equal to 27.3% in Grade 8, while for male students it is estimated to be 28.9%. For female students, the highest rate of repetition is 13.4% in Grade 4 and for male students, 13.5% in Grade 7.

Table 4.24 attached to the Annex-1 page 433 shows the problem of students' repetition by states. It is clear that repetition on average is highest among females at 12.0% and lower among males at 10.9%. On average the lowest rates of repetition was recorded for Khartoum students at 2.6%, higher for male as 2.9% and slightly lower for females at 2.3%. By state, the highest rates of repetition are recorded for North Kordufan. For males, it is 15.8% in average and 22.8% in Grade 7, while for females it is 18.1% on average and 21.1 % in Grade 8. In all, North Kordufan is the first state in Sudan where repetition is a serious problem. By residence, the higher rate of repetition is recorded in rural areas, which is 13.4% in average, over urban areas; it is 12.7% on average. Repetition is greater among rural females, 13.5% in average, and 17.7% in Grade 8, than rural males, 13.4 in average and 15.4% in Grade 1.

For our study, Diagram 4.22 shown below is developed from the Table 4.23 attached to the Annex-1 page 432 on the percentage of repetition and dropout 1998/1999 in Khartoum and North Kordufan States.

Diagram 4.22

Percentage of Repetition and Dropout 1998/1999 at
Khartoum and North Kordufan States



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Ministry of Education Quoted in WB 2003:35)

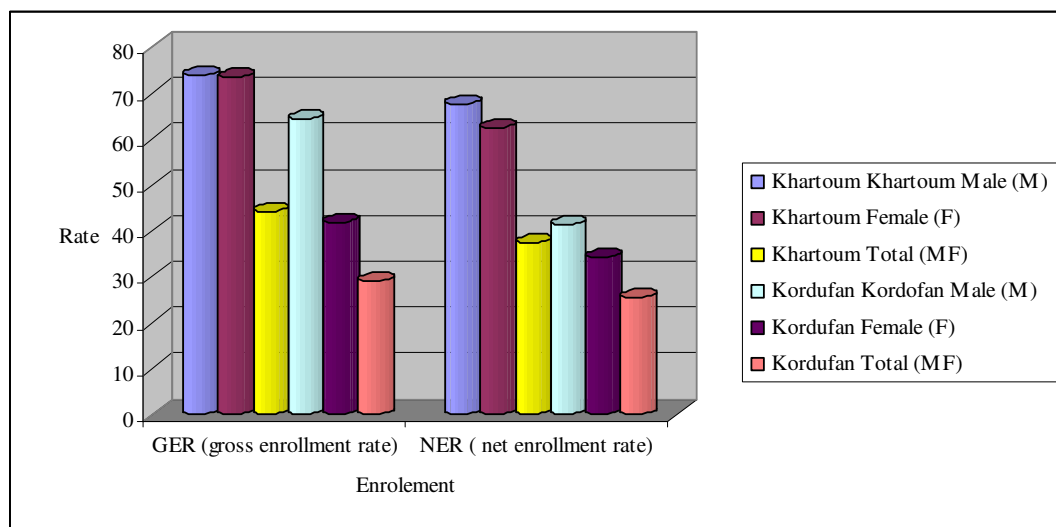
On the other hand and according to the Human Development Report 2007/ 2008 (2007) the net primary enrolment rate (%) in 1991 was 40% and in 2005 it was 43% this indicates a very slow change in the net primary enrolment during the said period.

Another educational negative impact is the low gross and net enrolment ratio of students enrolled in basic education in the period 1989–1999 in all states. Table 4.24 attached to Annex-1 page 433 explains the low gross and net enrolment ratios in basic education in most of the states. The highest gross and net enrolment ratio in basic education (1998/99) is recorded for the northern states. The gross enrolment for the female students is equal to 86.7% and net enrolment is equal to 84.1% which are lower than the male student records which are equal to 87.2% & 85.7% respectively with a very narrow gender gap between female and male students' enrolments. The lowest states are the southern states. The southern states records of the students gross and

enrolment ratios in total it is equal to 12.5% and 11.4%. These ratios are lowest among female students which are equal to 10.5% and 9.4%, than among male students which are equal to 14% and 13.3%, with slight gender gap ratios in gross and net basic education enrolment. Diagram 4.23, created from Table 4.25 attached to the Annex-1 page 434, gives more details about the low ratio of gross and net enrolment rates for Khartoum and North Kordufan.

Diagram 4.23

Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios in Basic Education,
1998/1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Ministry of Education Quoted in WB 2003:22)

As shown in Diagram 4.23: above the total average rate in enrolment in basic education in Khartoum state is low and very low in North Kordufan state. In Khartoum state the record estimated to be 73.6% (GER) and 65.1% (NER) and in Kordufan state 44.2% (GER) and 37.3% (NER). However, the record at Khartoum state is better than the record at North Kordufan state with the difference equal to 29.4% GER and 27.8% NER. Thus, basic education policies adopted during these years affected both Khartoum and North Kordufan states in general and negatively affected North Kordufan state in particular. In both states the records indicate there are gender gaps in enrolment in basic education. In Khartoum state the gender gap in GER is very slight, 0.3%, while in North Kordufan state it is very wide, 22.6%. In NER, the gender gap in Khartoum state is very high, 5% compared to North Kordufan state in which records indicate there is no gender gap in NER.

According to SMDGs R (2005:9) many regions of Sudan have already seen an enormous expansion in schooling. But Federal Ministry of Education (FMOE) figures show that the overall achievement in basic education is still low and that there are huge regional disparities (SMDGs R 2005:9). Also the report indicates that higher levels of enrolment are found in the more prosperous northern regions that are not directly affected by the conflict, whilst the lowest ratios correspond to the conflict affected regions of the South, the West and Eastern Sudan.

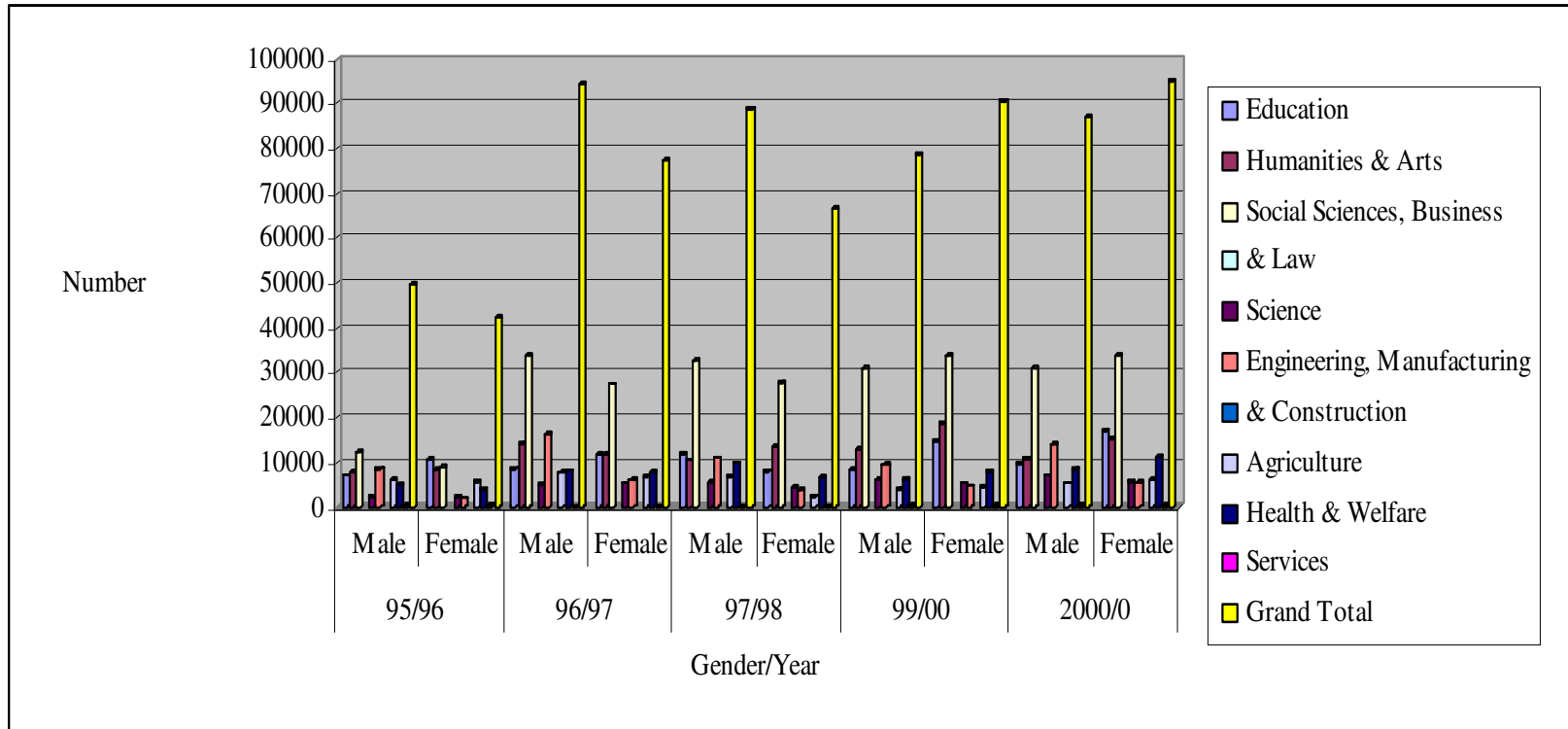
However the picture is quite different for the policies on education in Sudan during the years 1995/96 and 2000/01. Funds were directed towards university education rather than basic education. A presidential decree was issued in 1990 to expand higher education and establish at least one university in each state.

According to the SMDGs R (2005:14) the situation of girls compared to boys in secondary schools is better than in primary schools. For the years 1996/97 and 2002/03 the ratio of girls to boys in secondary education is almost equal for the same years (48%). The rate of growth for both, however, is lower (SMDGs R 2005:14) which was estimated to be 1.6% for boys, 2.7% for girls and the total was 2.1%.

Thus the number of universities has increased from five in 1995 to reach 26 universities in 2000. Thus university education progressed very quickly, especially for females where more universities have been established than ever before. This fact has been supported by the increasing number of students enrolled in government universities for the academic years 1990/1991-2000/01 as illustrated in Table 4.26 attached to the Annex-1 page 435, Diagram 4.24 has been created from the Table 4.26 attached to the Annex-1 page 435, to identify the increasing percentage of enrolment of university students during the year 1990-2000/0 to indicate the impact of the SAP.

Diagram 4.24

Students Enrolled in Government Universities According to International Classification for Education, 1990/1991-2000/01



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Ministry of Education Quoted in WB 2003:22)

Diagram 4.24 above indicates that female enrolment in higher education was increasing dramatically during the period from 1990/1 to 2000/1. In total, female students' enrolment increase is 55.6 % while male students' increase is 42.92%.

An increase in percentage of female enrolment is recorded in Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction at 168.7%. The discipline that was dominated by males as indicated earlier in this chapter is Capacity Building and Training. This field is followed by Social Sciences, Business & Law. The Agriculture field has the lowest increase in female enrolment at 6.1%. For males, the highest increase in enrolment is in Science, 62.2%, followed by Social Sciences, Business & Law, 60.0%. The Agriculture field has a decrease in male enrolment at -11.8%.

There are now more women than men at university. They presently make up 62% of students in higher education, compared with 47.2% in 1995. However, from this analysis it is important to mention that there was a much larger budget directed to university education than basic education as analysed previously. This has also been reflected in secondary education. Between 1993 and 2001, the enrolment of girls in secondary schools increased by 75%. Gross percentage of females at high secondary school is 36.15%, while that of males is 21.69% (World Bank: 2003:16-30).

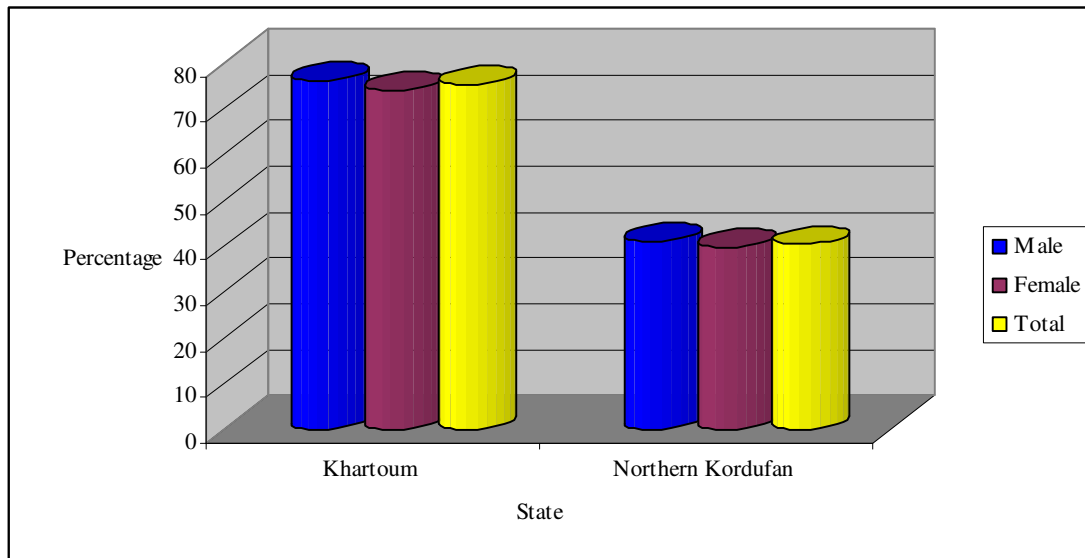
In Sudan in general and according to the Human Development Report 2007/2008 (2007) adult literacy rate (% aged 15 and older) is equal to 60.9 for the period 1995- 2005 and among youth literacy rate (% aged 15-24) is 77.2 for the same duration 1995-2005, and specific data for women literacy indicated in the report.

Literacy rate is also very low among women and creates a serious educational problem as it will be shown from the analysis of the data in Table 4.27 attached to the Annex-1 page 436 percentage of population above 15 years that is literate. Literacy rate is very low among most of the states of Sudan, especially among females. The table indicates that the literacy rate is 49.9 % in total; 50.6% among males and 49.2% among females. There is a slight gender differentiation equal to 1.4%. The highest literacy rate is recorded for Khartoum state at 74.9% in total, highest among males at 75.9% and 73.9% among female with a gender gap equal to 2%. The lowest literacy rate was recorded for Western Darfur state at 25.9% in total, higher among males, 27.5%, than among females, 24.6%, with slight gender gap of 1.9%. For

our study, Diagram 4.25 below has been developed from Table 4.27 attached to the Annex-1 page 436. This table indicates that the literacy rate in Khartoum state is equal to 74.9%, while in North Kordufan state it is equal to 40.2% of the population is literate.

Diagram 4.25

Percent of population above 15 years that literate in
Khartoum and Kordufan



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Ministry of Education quoted in WB 2003:25)

School facilities and training of teachers, which directly affect academic attainment and educational efficiency, are extremely poor in the vast majority of schools. The percentage of trained teachers in northern Sudan, which was 75% in 1991, dropped to 68.3% in 1996 and to 54.7% in 1999. Regional variations are enormous, e.g. 86% in West Darfur state, 67.1% in North Kordufan state, and 50% in Gezira state.

Relating educational level to poverty incidence data from Ministry of Education and reported by the (WB:2003) as presented in Table 4.27 attached to the Annex-1 page 436 indicates that in both rural and urban areas, the incidence of poverty declines with educational level, reaching 74.7% and 72.2% in 1996 for those with university education in urban and rural areas, respectively. Of the total number of households whose heads were illiterate the incidence of poverty increased from 67.4 % in 1990 to reach 94.9 % in 1996 in rural areas. And for household head who read and write the incidence of poverty increased from 64.7% in 1990 to reach 94.1 % in 1996 in rural areas.

On the other hand, for households whose heads attained a university education or above, 58.8% were poor in 1990, increasing to 72.2% in 1996 in rural areas and from 79.2 in 1990 % to reach 74.7% in urban areas.

. . . **Access to safe drinking water and sanitation**

Water is obviously required for both humans and livestock. The availability of water for Sudan's large herds of cattle, sheep, goats, and camels has always been a constraint to the expansion of the livestock sector. It has also been a source of considerable friction as nomadic herders move around in search of grazing and find themselves intruding on water points that can be under considerable stress even in a normal dry season. The purpose of this brief section, however, is to focus on domestic water supplies and sanitation.

Human Development Report 2008/2007 (2007) indicates that the population using improved sanitation (%) in 1990 is equal to 33 and 34 in 2004. And the population using an improved water source in 1990 is equal to 64 and in 2004 it is equal to 70. In both these two indicators the progress in the situation of using improved drinking water and sanitation is very slow especially in using improved water resources.

According to the SMDGs R (2005:37) the proportion of the population in northern Sudan who have access to an improved water resource is estimated at 70%. However this conceals considerable regional variations – ranging from 24% in Blue Nile state to 93% in Khartoum state. In many parts of the country accessibility hinges not on the physical availability of water but, rather, on how water is managed (SMDGs R 2005:37).

The type and quality of domestic water supplies are highly variable and generally inadequate in Sudan's driest states, which typically have a high proportion of the poor. Hence, an analysis by state, in particular Khartoum and North Kordufan states, is unlikely to reflect the full extent of the problems facing both rural and urban households and mainly poor women who are responsible from household water provision and management.

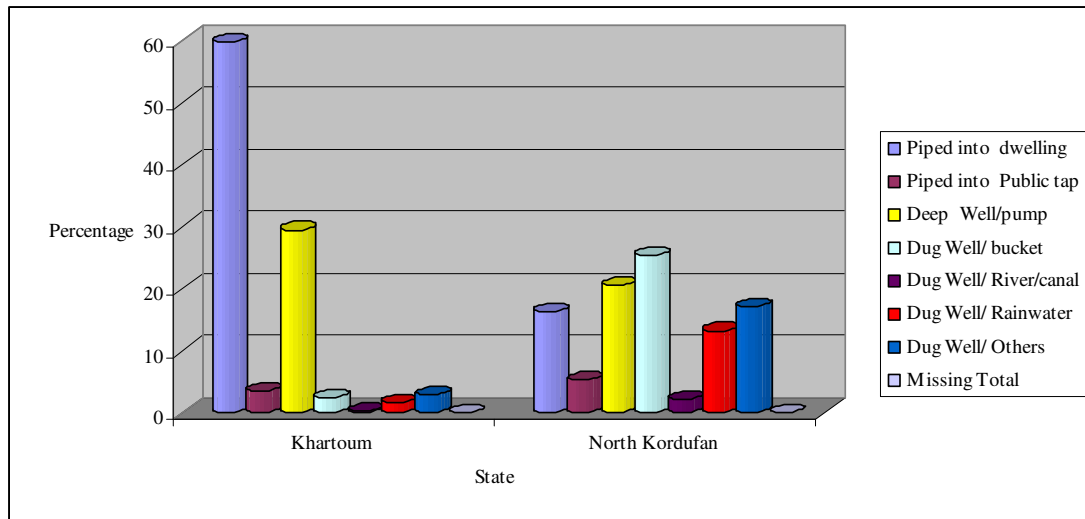
The Table 4.28 attached to the Annex-1 page 437 compiled from UNICEF, Multiple Indicators Cluster survey, 2000, and Safe Motherhood Survey, 1999 indicate that in Northern Sudan the overall water situation is grim. The highest percentage, 43.1%, of water drinking

sources is recorded for wells that contribute drinking water to households. There are two types of wells, deep well or hand pump comprise 28.4% and dug wells comprise 14.7%. 24% that provide water from a pipe into a dwelling, 11.2% from river/canal and hafirs, the system of rainwater collecting contributed 8.1%. The percentages of households with access to safe drinking water are very low in urban areas, only 44.3% as the highest percentage have access to pipe into dwelling, 10.5% access a public tap, while 24.6% access a deep well/pump. In rural areas the situation is worse. 30.9% of households get access to safe drinking water from deep well/pump followed by 18.9% from dug well/ bucket. 29% use river/canal and 13% catch rain water. The highest percentage of the households 76.6%, with access to a deep well/hand pump are estimated to be in Southern Kordufan, followed by West Kordufan at 62.8% and North Darfur at 42.1%. The rest of the states show very low access to a hand pump like North Darfur. Settlements located near the rivers depend greatly on river water for drinking, including 33.2% of households in Blue Nile state, 25.8% of households in White Nile state and Kassala 23.1%. The highest percentage of households depending on rainwater is 27.9% in Blue Nile state, followed by 19.7% in West Kordufan state and 18.5% in West Darfur state.

Diagram 4.26 below has been developed from Table 4.28 attached to the Annex-1 page 437: Drinking Water Sources in Northern Sudan (percent of population) to shed more light on the water resources available for households in our study areas. The diagram shows that there is low percentage of household access to safe drinking water in both Khartoum and North Kordufan states. In North Kordufan the highest percentage of households depending on wells (dug & deep well) is 45.9%. 25.4% of households access water with dug well/bucket and 20.5% with deep well. In Khartoum 59.8% of households depend on pipe into dwelling followed by 29.5% with deep well. Thus women and girls, whose main responsibility is water provision, suffer more from water problems such as impure water and water shortages. These statistics indicate that access to safe water is a big problem throughout the country; in particular North Kordufan has the lowest proportions of households with access to safe drinking water supplies. The existence of piped water to dwellings is regarded as a measure of well-being and therefore used to provide some guidance on changes in poverty.

Diagram 4.26

Drinking Water Sources in Northern Sudan (percent of population)



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (MICS & S M S quoted in WB 2003:10)

The last decade witnessed a surge in rural-to-urban migration as mentioned earlier in this chapter. Urban populations grew from 6.8 million in 1993 to 10.3 million in 1999. This increased the pressure on the already limited urban water services. However, the National Water Corporation added other water problems such as problem of insufficiency of water during dry seasons and inadequate quality of water during rainy seasons, thus a low percentage of households have adequate access to safe water. Abdel Ati and Eltayeb (2005: 23) state that about 90% of major epidemics in the Sudan are water-borne and water-related diseases, causing the death of some 40% of children under five years of age.

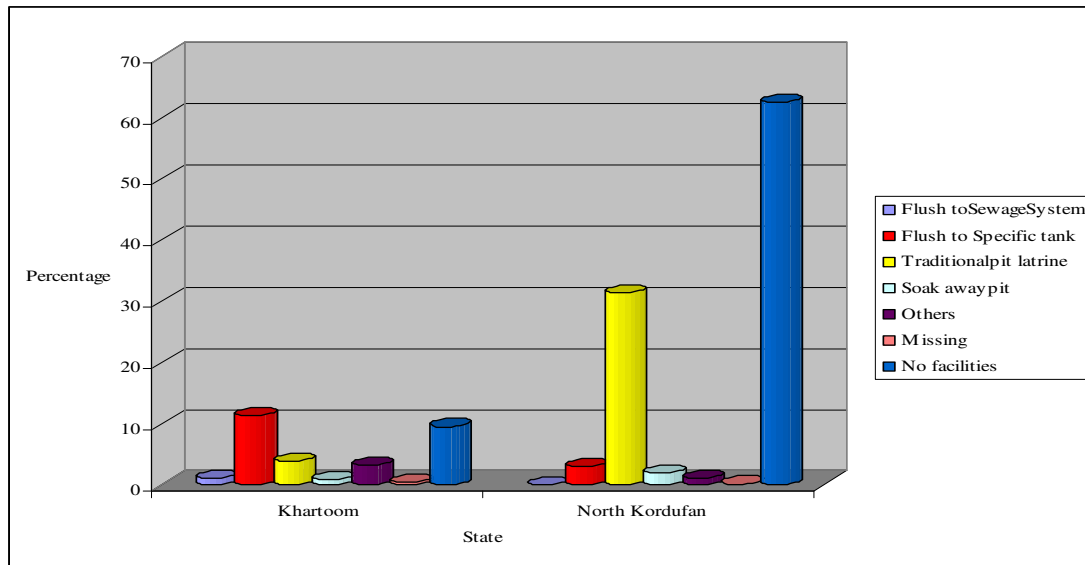
Another important issue that needs analysis is sanitation. To be comprehensive, this subject should cover solid and liquid waste disposal, excreta disposal, and the removal of other sources of environmental pollution. Since excreta disposal is the major sanitation issue in Sudan, this section focuses on that. According to the SMDGs R (2005:38) on average it is estimated that 64% of the population have access to sanitation, though there are wide regional variations (SMDGs R 2005:38).

As noted above with respect to domestic water supplies, the quality of sanitation facilities situation varies considerably between and within states, and between and within urban areas. Table 4.29 attached to the Annex-1 page 438 emphasises the lack of access to sanitary means

of human waste disposal for the majority of the households in Northern Sudan. In total, 61.7% of the households in Northern Sudan have a sanitary means of excreta disposal, and 38.3% do not have human waste disposal facilities. A sanitary method is defined as either flush toilet, a septic tank or a traditional pit latrine of varying depth and design. Those without any of these methods have basically nothing and, depending on the location, excreta could become a serious health hazard. Lack of human waste disposal facilities is a serious risk for human health and environmental pollution both in urban and rural areas. As illustrated in Table 4.29 attached to the Annex-1 page 438, in urban residences 61.6% of the households are recorded using a traditional pit latrine followed by 16.7% households that do not have human waste disposal facilities. While in rural areas the highest percentage is 52.3% of households that do not have any human waste disposal facilities, followed by 44% of the households that use a traditional pit latrine. Diagram 4.27 shown below is created from Table 4.29 attached to the Annex-1 page 438 to illustrate the situation in our study areas.

Diagram 4.27

Excreta Disposal in Khartoum and Northern Kordufan 1999 (Percent of population)



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (MICS & SMS quoted in WB 2003:11)

From the Diagram 4.27 it is clear that only in Khartoum state, 1.1% of households have a flush sewage system. In Red Sea state, 20.9% of households use flush to specific tank. The highest percentage, 72.6%, of households in Nile state followed by 69.2% of households in Northern State use a traditional pit latrine. 62.6% of households in Northern Kordufan do not

have access to human waste disposal facilities, followed by Al Gadarif, 60.1%, Kassala, 52%, West Darfur, 51.6%, Red Sea 47.9%, Southern Kordufan, 46.4%, White Nile, 43.2, Sinnar 42.7%, and Al Gezira, 40%. For more details see the Table 4.29 attached to the Annex-1 page 438. Soak away pit is not commonly used method of human waste disposal for households in Northern Sudan however, 5.3% of households use this method in Sinnar state. Sudan has many large open spaces in rural areas so the non existence of a pit latrine, while inconvenient and a major issue for girls in rural schools is seldom regarded as a serious health hazard. In this context, the absence of septic systems or pit latrines in rural areas of South Darfur or West Kordufan is not necessarily an environmental disaster.

Ministry of Welfare and Social Development (2002) emphasises that Sudan's government has set the goal of universal access to safe drinking water and sanitary means of human waste disposal, as we shall see in the next chapter, the Comprehensive National Strategy (CNS) (1992-2002) gives priority to the following strategies: protection of water from pollution; increased community involvement; low-cost appropriate technology; and the availability of 18 litres of water per capita per day (L/C/D) for rural areas and 90 L/C/D for urban centres.

The coordination and the effort devoted by the SWGU in the promotion of these objectives by cooperating with different ministries and NGOs as indicated in SWGU Matrix Plan for the Economic Development Secretariat 1999-2004, will be dealt with in the next chapter.

. **Conclusion**

The decline in public investment in services has reflected negatively on the population and being reflected in high percentage of the population under the poverty line,. Significant increase is observed in both the depth and severity of poverty for all poor households in rural between 1990 and 1996.

The poverty indicators included exceeding number of migration, decline in production following the migration of a larger proportion of working household members, high unemployment rate of females than for male, female in informal sector earned less than men, presence of some women in the minority of very high earners in the formal economic activities.

Decline in the wages of the labourers and deteriorating of social services caused increase number of child homelessness wide infant and under-five mortality rate, increase of children's diseases such as malnutrition, malaria and less coverage in vaccines especially in Kordufan and Darfur, and high prevalence rates of HIV/AIDS in the war affected areas in the south. Access of the Sudanese households to basic health services deteriorated and good care in the private sector is expensive.

Rates of dropout from the school and repetition were highest among female students especially in North Kordufan. Primary net enrolment rate for female students is lower than the male student especially southern states and other conflict affected regions of the South, the West and Eastern Sudan. Literacy rate is also very low among women especially in Western Darfur. School facilities and training of teachers are extremely poor in the vast majority of schools in both rural and urban areas.

Type and quality of domestic water supplies are highly variable and generally inadequate especially in Sudan's driest states, where the households depending on rainwater such as in Blue Nile state, West Kordufan and West Darfur state. Lack of human waste disposal facilities created serious risk for human health and environmental pollution both in urban and rural areas and mainly in Northern Kordufan, Al Gadarif, Kassala, West Darfur, Red Sea and Southern Kordufan.

Also the above mentioned indicators confirm that there was a great persistence of regional

disparities, especially between the northern and the southern states. Poor states such as Darfur, Kordufan and Southern states need more development attention. Although there have been positive developments in narrowing the gender gap in certain areas such as education, health and formal employment, there is a great deal more that still needs to be done.

It is therefore particularly important to have a proper strategy to integrate specific programmes to assist women to empower them socially, economically and politically. This will be explained in details in chapter five and six which will be dealing with Sudan recent structure economic policies of poverty: Poverty Alleviation National Strategy that has gradually been moving from over-emphasis on poverty economic aspects towards more sustainable policies, strategies and programmes. It is now increasingly recognised that sustainable poverty alleviation requires a comprehensive view, which goes beyond a narrow focus on insufficient income to cover basic needs. This implies moving beyond the symptoms of poverty, and identifying the complexity of the variables which perpetuate its underlying conditions, i.e. lack of capabilities to take advantage of potential economic opportunities; lack of access to resources such as land, capital, and technology; food insecurity and malnutrition which undermine the main asset of the poor, namely their labour and social exclusion of the poor from the design and implementation of poverty programmes.

Chapter Five: Structural adjustment and poverty alleviation policies

. Introduction

The previous part of the study outlined the socio-economic conditions of poverty in Sudan at the national and state levels with emphasis to the states where the SWGU savings and microcredit projects are being implemented. This part of the study shall be devoted to discuss one of the structural adjustment and poverty alleviation policies which is the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy (NCPRS). As an interim stage for the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) the government launched a poverty alleviation effort in 1992 as part of its 10-year (1992-2002) Comprehensive National Strategy for economic development. The WB (2003:19) emphasised that although no national household survey has been conducted since 1978, sub-national poverty surveys suggest that poverty remains high; The last nationally representative household survey was held in 1978 (WB 2003:19). This statement has been supported by the Sudan Millennium Development Goals Report (SMDGs R) (2005:2) by mentioning that for assessing progress in achieving the SMDGs for which there are no systematic data and information for the whole of Sudan since 1978 (SMDGs R 2005:2). Regarding the 1992 Household Survey (mainly for northern Sudan); the Safe Motherhood Survey, 1999, carried out by the CBS in collaboration with UNFPA and the 2000 Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) carried out in collaboration with UNICEF, and as said by the SMDGs R (2005) all these surveys were confined to northern Sudan (SMDGs R 2005:2). And according to SMDGs R (2005) the fourth population census was undertaken in 1993 and the fifth census, which should have been carried out in 2003 was not feasible because of the conflict (MDGR 2005: vi). Only in 2008 the census has been executed but the result of the census is not yet published.

The implementation of the NCPRS (1992-2002) started with the implementation of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme that concentrates on the social aspects as an approach to alleviating poverty in Sudan through the implementation of microcredit programmes. The mechanism adopted by NCPRS and the role played by some financial institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) especially the SWGU in the implementation of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Family Production Programme shall be highlighted in this chapter and Chapter six as more details will be highlighted to

reveal the role of the SWGU in coordinating for the preparation of the Quarter -Century Strategy for the Advancement of Women (2003-2027)(QCSFAW).

As indicated by the Ministry of Welfare and Social Development (MOWSD the preparation of this Quarter Century Strategy comes at the time when its predecessor, the ten-year National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy covering the period 1992-2002, has drawn to a close and the main lines of emphasis and the goal of the new strategy will apply to the coming quarter of a century (MOWSD 2002:2). It is a comprehensive national strategy that will constitute an important pioneering step forward in the task of laying the foundations of strategic thinking in the country.

The NCPRS and its Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programmes have been formulated based on the poverty situation in Sudan. This situation has been analysed in the first part of this chapter. This analysis is drawn mainly from the information and results of the MMS surveys 1990 and 1996 and the SMS 1999 and MIC 2000 surveys. The National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy has been based on six core pillars which include economic, education, health, human rights, peace and conflict and politics. These pillars are used as a general framework for the NCPRS with the stipulated broad aim of achieving poverty reduction in Sudan. Thus, based on the guidance of these six pillars, the NCPRS focuses on two approaches that paved the road to poverty reduction in Sudan. The first approach is the capability development approach to poverty reduction. This approach does not take into account the economic aspects of increasing return or income but embraces what can assist the rural poor to meet their survival needs. These needs include safe drinking water and sanitation, public health, education, roads construction and other infrastructural services. Development services are directed to tackle the social impacts of the structural adjustment and liberalisation policies that have resulted from the decline in investment services as mentioned above.

The second approach is the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Development Services projects that target poor female headed households and other poor families to achieve 'women's economic empowerment' without deep concentration on the other side of the coin, which is the social aspects and gender issues that lead to female poverty.

Since the early 1990s, the term 'empowerment' has become widespread within the gender and development lexicon, with the stated aim of an increasing number of development interventions, particularly those related to poverty reduction, being to 'empower women'. One of the most common objectives is to enhance women's capacity to select their economic projects, which is often envisaged as best achieved through raising their access to resources. This approach will be dealt with in the analysis of the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Programme in this chapter as well as in Chapters six and seven.

.2 Poverty reduction infrastructural services projects

Government policy has been directed to reduce poverty through Poverty Reduction Programmes that cover three fields of intervention, mainly education, health and water supply. Based on these policies, each field of intervention consists of many components of infrastructural services projects as illustrated below:

The education policy was embodied in an act entitled Comprehensive National Strategy for the Education Sector, 1992 with the objective 'Education for All'. It has been absorbed in the Sudan Millennium Development Goals (SMDGs) namely

- Achieve universal primary education to ensure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling
- Promote gender equality and empower women to decrease the illiteracy rate to only 10 percent by 2000, emphasising the eradication of illiteracy among women.

Based on SMDGs the following objectives had been listed:

- Enrolment of all children age six and above by 1998 in basic education.
- Widen the scope of preschool education through public preschools, Koran schools, and non-formal education by 2000.
- Promote opportunities for education, with special emphasis on the education of deprived groups, and eradicate the disparities in education between males and females by the beginning of 2001.
- Improve the quality of basic education through teacher training, upgrading of academic standards, and making text books available.

Educational programmes included construction of 25 basic schools in different states, provision of furniture for 361,000 pupils and 7,000 teachers.

Concerning health and other cross issues such as environment and HIV/AIDS, the central government health sector policy goals are in line with the NCPRS (1992-2002) and in line with the following SMDGs:

- Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger targeting to reduce by half the proportion of people who suffer from hunger
- Reduce child mortality targeting to reduce by two thirds the mortality rate among children under five
- Improve maternal health targeting to reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio.
- Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases targeting to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and halt and begin to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases
- Ensure environmental sustainability target to reduce by half the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and achieve significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers, by 2020.

Bank of Sudan Report (2003:3) provided summary on the 1992 programme's health goals that included the provision of basic health care in terms of prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation; decreasing child mortality to fewer than 20 per 1,000 live births, providing maternal health care throughout the country and improving its quality; eradicating chronic and contagious diseases resulting from malnutrition; preventing pollution to reduce its impact on health; achieving a 100 percent vaccination rate for children; rehabilitating hospitals to international standards; decreasing the incidence of sick leave to 20 percent; making medicines easily available; establishing industries to produce medical equipment; developing human resources for the health sector; and updating health information systems and improving health education and awareness. Because of the public health sector's weak capacity at the time, implementation was assigned by default to the private sector. To achieve these goals health interventions include a malaria-fighting programme with two components: provision of insecticides, spray machines and vehicles and the rehabilitation of 35 health centres at 12 state and 7 rural hospitals.

The target of the government to provide piped water supply connections to 85% of the urban

population by the year 2002, with the remaining 15% being served by public stand posts. Water supply has two components; one is the provision of 221 rural water supply units distributed over 15 states. They comprise 103 water boreholes, 32 small dams, 97 dams (hafirs) and 32 water purification units while other component consists from provision of water supply equipment and materials. The performance of the implementation of these projects will be dealt with in the following paragraphs.

All these programmes have been considered more prominent areas that lead to the reduction of poverty at the household level and assist rural women in reducing their vulnerability to water shortages, water borne diseases and ignorance. To guarantee the successful implementation of the projects the Ministry of Finance and National Economy – Social Sector, set up a follow-up committee responsible for the coordination and the implementation of the NCPRS in 2001-2003. This committee would conduct evaluation reports on the implementation status of poverty reduction projects as well as gathering information needed for the preparation of the NCPRS Paper. To learn from experience, the follow-up committee paid attention to the follow up and evaluation of the National Poverty Reduction programme in financial and technical terms for water, health and education infrastructural services projects.

The follow up committee in its 2003 report indicated that there was a delay in the date of the actual implementation of the National Poverty Alleviation programme. The programme was planned to be implemented in 1999 but was implemented in June 2001 with total cost of 8.0 billion dinnar for the three sectors. The report also indicated that by April 2003 the performance of the poverty reduction projects encountered many obstacles that can be summarised as follows:

1. For the water sector; at the end of 2003 the construction of 3 new and the completion of 7 water supply purification units have not started yet. Delays in securing funds further delayed the implementation of construction until the rainy season which protracted movement of people and excavating machines.

Targeted urban water consumption had not been met up to 1999 in any of the 26 states of the country. About 30% of all urban population had connections in 1999 and none of the NCPRS goals of urban water availability, type and quality of supply were expected to be achieved by the end of the NCPRS period (2002). Nor has the issue of

regional disparities been addressed. In the areas of the study, especially the rural areas, there is an acute water shortage. The rural water sector has depended for a long time on foreign funding, with some local community participation. Shrinking public investment has adversely affected progress in rural water supply programmes. The three-year programme carried out under the NCPRS had very low achievement rates during the period 1992-1995. The higher rates of achievement in the hand pump programme are primarily a result of the strong support from UNICEF, effective community participation and the appropriateness and cost effectiveness of the technology used.

2. For the health sector; the government had ambitious goals, but they are far from being achieved. The weakness of the public health service, especially primary health centres in rural areas, training and qualification of the rural midwives, and provision of hospitals with the required equipment and apparatus was a core reason for the dismal performance of the strategy. At the same time central and state government expenditures on health were extremely low and there were delays in securing funds.
3. For the education sector there were delays in securing funds and executing these projects was channelled through the state authorities, causing further delays. Other factors behind some delays in execution include shortage of building materials at the localities, shortage of skilled labour and difficulties of movement due to rains. The following Table 5.1 and the Diagram 5.1 summarise these findings.

Table 5.1

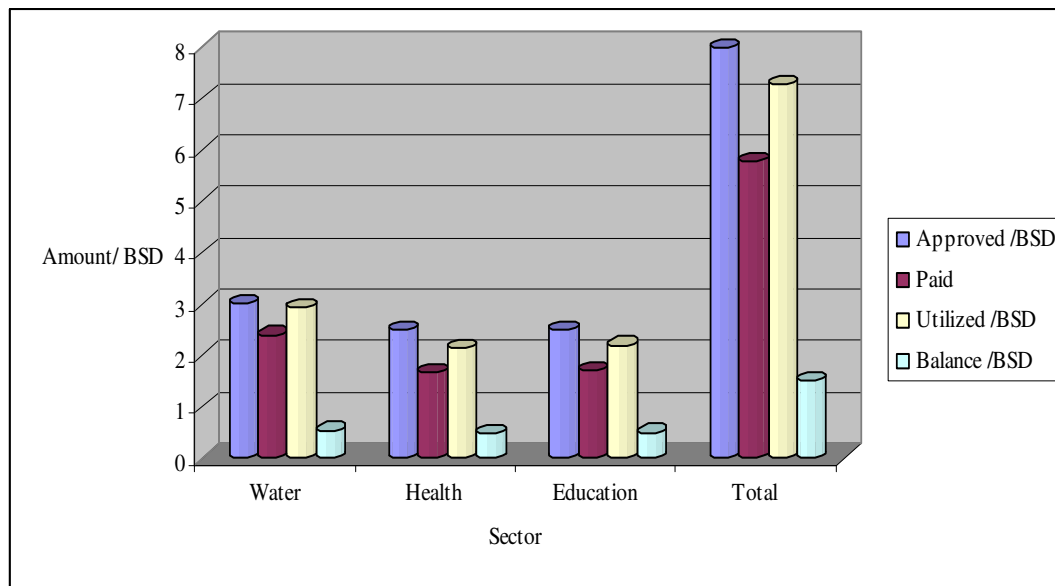
Implementation Status of the Poverty Reduction
Infrastructural Services Projects 2000-2003

Sector	Approved / BSD	Paid	Utilised/ BSD	Balance/ BSD
Water	3	2.397	2.935	0.538
Health	2.5	1.669	2.142	0.473
Education	2.5	1.7	2.2	0.5
Total	8	5.766	7.277	1.511

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2003:3)

Diagram 5.1

Implementation Status of the Poverty Reduction Infrastructural
Services Projects 2000-2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2003:3)

From the above implementation performance of these social services projects the best performance implementation, whether physical or financial, was recorded for the water sector, followed by health and finally education sector. The amount paid for the three sectors was less than the amount approved and the amount paid. In all sectors there were balance amount left.

According to the SWGU report (2003:4) the successes and failures of the National Poverty Alleviation Programme for social services can be summarised in the following points:

- There was provision of safe drinking water and a reduction of suffering for poor people in rural areas through the construction of numbers of wells, water reservoirs (Hafirs) and dams. But there is no measurement of how women in rural areas benefit from the water provision in terms of workload, combating water-borne diseases, water management and access to water. The problems of water shortage and pressure on water services have been solved. Additional successes include local participation in these projects and the spread of the use of cost effective technology.

- There has been a successful reduction in school fees through the construction of the schools, classrooms, and provision of school furniture in all states. No data is reported on alleviation of school absenteeism, teaching materials, teacher training, academic attainment or regional variation in educational services.
- There was promotion and development of health services through the construction of primary health centres in rural areas, training and qualification of the rural midwives, rehabilitation of rural hospitals and provision of hospitals with the required equipment and apparatus. It is not reported how such health provisions influence family members' health and reduce killer diseases, increase the number of people receiving health services, decrease the rate of infant mortality, increase services and raise awareness of HIV/AIDS.

.2. Constraints encountered

According to the SWGU Annual Report (2003) there was delay in fund transfer for the implementation of infrastructural activities of the three sectors of National Poverty Reduction programme. The programme was financed by self sufficient resources within the framework of the government's annual budget and some foreign aid. The National Poverty Reduction Programme needed to look for additional financial resources to sustain the functioning of these projects and facilitate the flow of funds for the 2003 projects. These projects constitute the core social development achievement and reduction of poverty in Sudan. From the evaluation of the programme at the end of 2002 at an interim phase for the preparation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper many problems had been identified:

- National coverage was not comprehensive since it included only the northern states and some southern states under the control of the government. Due to lack of security some southern states were not covered. There was not enough documented material about poverty conditions were to conceptualise poverty reduction.
- Lack of recent data, data available is not sufficient and lack of sufficient capacity and technical cadre in the area of poverty analysis necessitated a search for

outside experts to conduct needs assessment and needs identification (especially for incorporating gender issues) poverty analysis, and bridge the data gaps and population statistics required for the assessment of poverty in Sudan. This assessment was necessary for the final Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper. These social infrastructure services for poverty reduction raise questions about the role the SWGU played in running health, environmental and educational campaigns with the introduction of these projects. We shall study this role in the next chapter, as well as the challenge remaining about the role of the SWGU staff at the grassroots level. The SWGU must identify how these social facilities provisions impacted women and especially if female entrepreneurs benefited from these projects.

- The data collected for the assessment of variation in poverty levels in Sudan was not sufficient; therefore, there is lack of core data for the preparation of the National Poverty Reduction Programme. Consequently, the preparation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy document required for directing policy framework is missing. However, 2007 will witness the Sudan census but the information collected during this census is not available yet.
- Political changes and progress achieved in peace processes require that the Poverty Reduction Strategy document should be based on the results of the peace agreements especially that related to policies, apparatus, laws and executive orders related to the issue of poverty alleviation among poor women.

. **Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production programme**

. . **Introduction to family productive policy**

The state policy to promote small scale enterprises in order to support women and alleviate poverty conditions in Sudan is mainly reflected in this NCPRS (1992-2002) for poverty reduction as indicated above through the launching of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production programme. Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production programme

translated the women's strategy of alleviating poverty conditions in Sudan by promoting the small scale enterprises and allocating financial support to encourage micro enterprises as a tool to combat poverty. According to Al Awad & Khalafallah (2001:11) two million poor families were targeted for that programme to be provided with the assets of production and 200,000 poor families were targeted to be achieved annually during the ten years starting from 1992 to 2002. The funding for Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production programme was based totally on a special national financial provision from the local Zakat Social Development Funds (Zakat Fund) and other related institutions like SudaTel and several government ministries. To achieve this target the Ministry of Welfare and Social Development (MOWSD): (previously known as a Ministry of Social Planning) undertook the responsibility of the execution of the programme and established the Council of Co-ordination of Productive Families and Environmental Industries in 1993 to undertake the responsibility to determine the policies, the programmes and the mechanism to finance female production projects. In this concern the MOWSD, in co-ordination with the Ministry of Industry, established the Supreme Authority to Promote Small-Scale Industries in 1995. The aim of the Supreme Authority is to co-ordinate official and technical efforts including government work of some local social funds and local NGOs that have been established to serve specific religious, social and economic goals.

In 1997 the MOWSD established the Social Development Authority to implement, supervise and coordinate the social development strategy: NCPRS (1992-2002).

. .2 Objectives of the family productive policy

Based on the poverty situation analysed above, a set of aims had been designed through family productive projects to tackle poverty at the household level. According to Al Awad & Khalafallah (2001:3) the aims of these family productive micro projects were to increase family income; provide the daily basic needs; build job opportunities to mitigate migration from rural to urban areas; replace exported goods and create balanced regional development. Among other activities under the umbrella of family productive projects, families are also engaged in small credit home-based projects, such as leatherwork, cloth-making, tailoring, soap making, flour and oil mills, and production of a local Kissra' pancake, macaroons and

poultry. These small credit home-based projects are designed especially for poor, widowed, divorced and deserted women in the displaced areas around the big cities.

Currently this policy is touching very crucial poverty causes that have been analysed in this chapter, mainly unemployment, migration, decline in wages and unequal distribution of resources to combat poverty. The policy is also appreciated by other government organisations that have been directed to achieve social objectives such as social collaboration and self sufficiency. These organisations combat poverty by utilising the financial support of various social fund institutions such as Pension Fund, Collaborative Fund, National Social Insurance Fund, Students Support Fund and Sharia Support Fund. The contribution of some of these funds will be discussed in detail in this following part of this chapter.

. . Financial mechanism for family productive policy

Initiative action taken by the Ministry of Social Planning (known today as the Ministry of Welfare and Social Development (MOWSD)) to prepare and implement the National Social Solidarity (Takaful) and Production Programme is based on the philosophy of social solidarity and justice and moving away from international debt to encourage poverty reduction efforts through national financing mechanisms. The funding mechanism adopted for the implementation of the Social Mobilisation and Production Programme includes two major national financing institutions, Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development and SudaTel Fund through Credit and Social Development. The Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development is the first financing unit at the Ministry of Welfare & Social Development. Both Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development and the Credit and Social Development Bank of Ministry of Welfare and Social Development have important directorates at the Ministry of Welfare and Social Development for funding Poverty Reduction Strategy Programmes, mainly family productive programmes and other female microcredit projects via the coordinating with General Directorate for Women and the Family-.MOWSD

. . . Zakat Social Solidarity Fund

Zakat Fund is a religious-based system of wealth redistribution founded on the moral responsibility of the rich toward the poor. Every Muslim whose wealth exceeds a certain level is obliged to give a fixed ratio of his accumulated wealth for the benefit of poor people. Zakat

is distributed among very poor social groups in line with the provisions of the Quran.. The Zakat is not meant to be a mere transfer of income, except in the case of handicapped people and pensioners. For other recipients, it should enable them to earn their own income through building their productive capacities so that they become Zakat providers in the future.

In 1984, the Zakat Act was passed and the fund was brought under the taxation department. In 1986 a Chamber was established to manage all Zakat operations and in 1990 a new Act for Zakat was passed making the payment of Zakat mandatory for all wealthy persons and corporate bodies. The Chamber, which is independent of all other tax-raising agencies, is supervised by a board of trustees appointed by the President. Although the board, headed by the Minister of Welfare and Development, differs from elsewhere the Chamber is not accountable to any executive body.

The Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development has been playing a prominent role in collecting Zakat (religious taxation) from various resources. During the implementation of the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy during the period 1996 to 2001, the Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development managed to secure funding from different resources. Table (5.2) and the Diagram (5.2) below provide more details:

Table 5.2

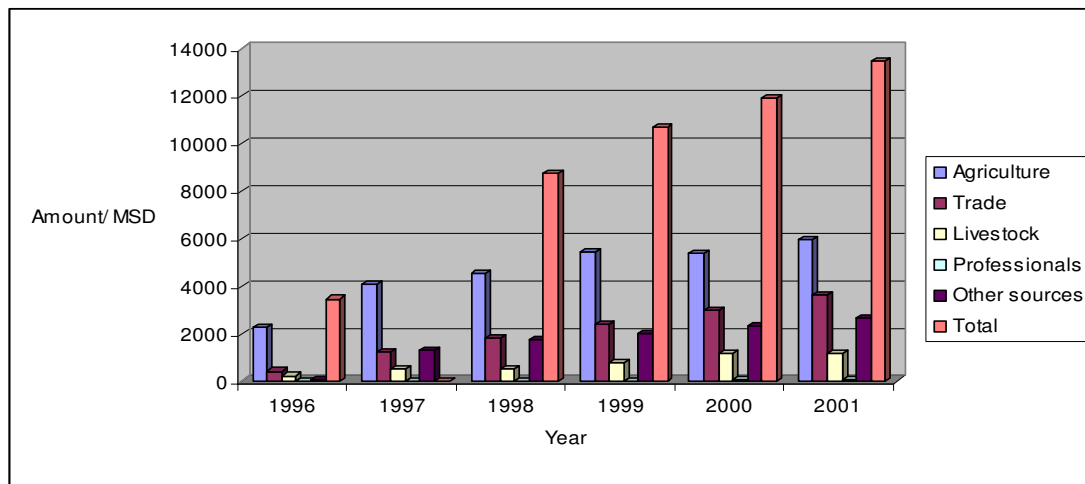
Growth of Various Sources of Zakat (Million Sudanese Dinar)

Source	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Agriculture	2256.5	4101.9	4565	5472.6	5361.6	5971.8
Trade	439.7	1223.9	1839	2416.4	3008.7	3618.9
Livestock	245.3	537.4	550.9	812.7	1178.6	1172.8
Professionals	6.2	18.7	25.9	35.5	68.2	63.1
Other sources	81.4	1315.8	1773	1998.3	2360.2	2667
Total	3479	2 7179.0	8728	10700	11909.1	13460.5

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (WB2003: 87)

Diagram 5.2

Growth of Various Sources of Zakat (Million Sudanese Dinar)



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (WB2003: 87)

Table 5.2 and Diagram 5.2 indicate that the Zakat Social Development Fund budget in 2001 reached 13.4 billion Sudanese Dinar (SD) that was collected from various sources such as agriculture, trade, livestock, professionals and others. The highest contribution sector in the growth of the Zakat Social Development Fund budget during 1996-2001 was from the agriculture sector and the lowest one was the Professional sector. It is clear that Zakat resources have increased steadily, from 27.8 million SD in 1990 to SD 13.5 billion (US 51 million) in 2001, with a cumulative total of SD 48.27 billion (US 182.35 million). The financial transactions of the Chamber are audited by the Auditor General. States' chambers and thousands of local committees at the level of villages and urban areas collect Zakat. Zakat Committees had been established in each state in Sudan to collect Zakat and identify the poorest people at the grassroots level with the assistance of the Local People's Committees and Mosques. Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development annually collects slightly over 1% of the national income of the country. According to Ibrahim, in 1995 nearly 2 billion Sudanese Pound L.S (29% of the Zakat fund allocated for the poor in that year, and slightly over 1% of the country's national income) were allocated for the provision of the means of production for small enterprises (Ibrahim:2002 :16). In 2005 the Zakat Fund collected 27 billion SD and in 2006 managed to collect 31 billion SD (Radio Programme 1:12 noon 10th February 2007).

The policy of the Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development supports poor productive families. From 1995 to 1999 Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development managed to reach 92,246 poor families who were supported with up to 1,073 Million Dinar. Other support for

orphans or widowed poor women covering 49,811 beneficiaries cost 849,238,750 Dinar. To summarise the performance of the Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development, it is clear that the total amount, 1,922,238,750 dinar or nearly the budgeted 2 billion dinar was spent from 1995 to 1999 and 142,057 female headed households and poor families were covered. The following Table (34) and Diagram (30) illustrate the Zakat Fund Performance during 1995-1999.

Table 5.3

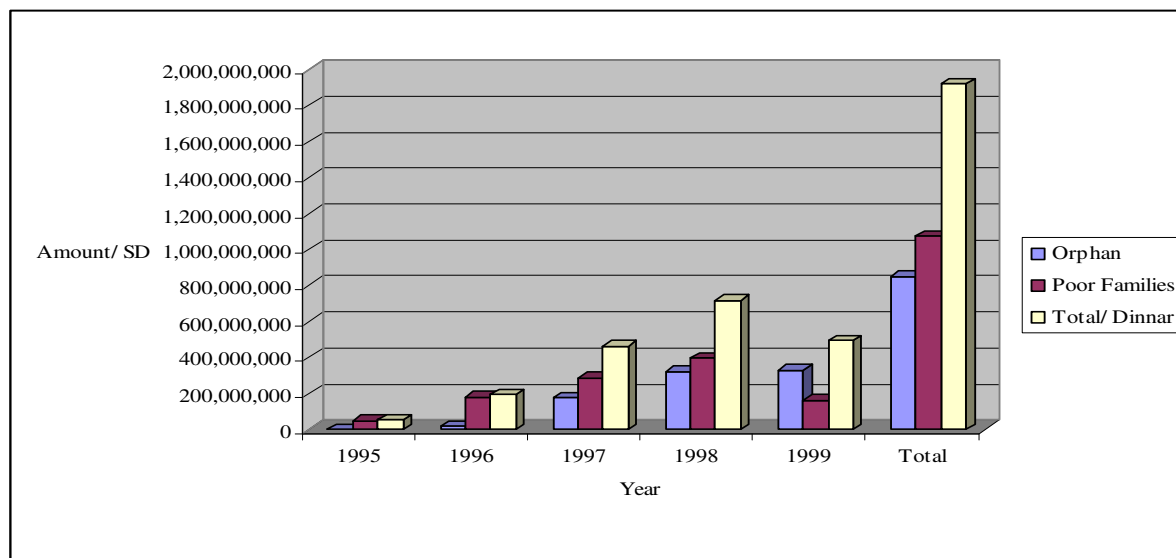
Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development: Financial Support for Orphans & Poor Productive Families, 1995-1999

Year	Orphan	Poor Families	Total/ Dinnar	Remark
1995	1,936,450	50,000,000	51,936,450	In cash or kind
1996	16,402,300	179,500,000	195,902,300	
1997	178,500,000	285,300,000	463,800,000	
1998	322,100,000	395,000,000	717,100,000	
1999	330,300,000	163,200,000	493,500,000	
Total	849,238,750	1,073,000,000	1,922,238,750	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad& Khalafallah 2001:11)

Diagram 5.3

Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development: Financial Support for Orphans & Poor Productive Families, 1995-1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad& Khalafallah 2001:11)

Under the umbrella of poverty reduction in Sudan, Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development directed its increasing funding of 1.9 billion dinar toward supporting 49,811 orphan and 92,246 poor families (total 142, 057 families) from 1995 to 1999. As shown in the diagram above, there was increasing amounts of money spent during this period for orphans and increasing numbers of orphans were reached. Zakat Social Solidarity Fund reached its maximum expenditure equal to 395,000,000 dinar to reach 28,560 families. This amount decreased in 1999 to 163,200,000 SD to reach 14,280 families.

These figures as indicated below in Table (5.4) illustrate that in 1999 Zakat Social Solidarity Fund policy was more directed toward spending on orphans than poor families as well as the trend of reaching the target groups during the year 1995-1999.

Table 5.4

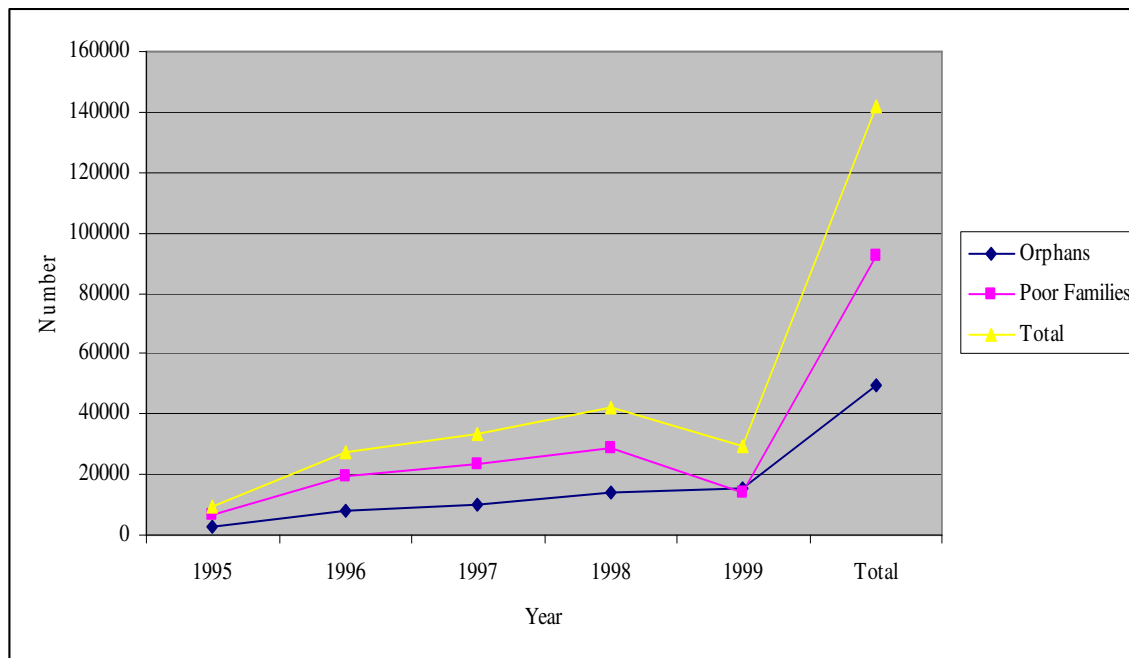
Number of Orphans & Poor Productive Families
Reached by Zakat Social Solidarity Fund 1995-1999

Year	Orphans	Poor Families	Total
1995	2760	6500	9260
1996	8176	19343	27519
1997	9915	23563	33478
1998	13760	28560	42320
1999	15200	14280	29480
Total	49811	92246	142057

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:11)

Diagram 5.4

Number of Orphans & Poor Productive Families
Reached by Zakat Social Solidarity Fund 1995-1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad& Khalafallah 2001:11)

The planned budget for the implementation of the poverty strategy (2000-2002) was estimated to be 8.78 billion and the target group was 163,650 poor families (Al Awad& Khalafallah 2001:11)

Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development is also concerned with establishing 23 women's social and production centres, distributing inputs of production to individual and group micro enterprises, and providing services in food security, which includes the establishment of dairy farms, ownership of livestock and other animal husbandry services, food security for poor labourers. In addition Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development also works to establish free educational and health services, including health insurance for the orphans. SWGU was one of the targeted NGOs to benefit from Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development to establish six social and production centres and funding SWGU female microcredit projects for Khalawi beneficiaries, as we shall see in Chapters 5 and 6. Zakat Fund transfers its funds using different channels such as banks to support the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy, financing microcredit projects as a tool to alleviate poverty in Sudan.

. . .2 Credit and Social Development Bank

The MOWSD has important directorates, mainly Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development and the Credit and Social Development Bank for financing poverty reduction programmes.

Funding micro-enterprises has been seen as a challenge all over the globe. A multitude of financing schemes has been in operation for many years in different developing countries. Experience shows that financing micro-enterprises is hampered by the absence of collateral, the high risk of default on loans and high administrative costs as detailed in chapter six and seven.

One of the major developments in Sudan in the last two decades is the emergence of Islamic banks. Sudan is a country where the whole banking system has been converted to Islamic banks. These institutions utilise the Islamic financing formulae to provide venture capital to small entrepreneurs, including those who work at home. More information in the Islamic financial formula will be illustrated in the section that deals with financing institution policies for family production microcredit and savings programme- chapter four.

One of the important banks that support female entrepreneurs' micro credit projects is the Credit and Social Development Bank that was changed in 1995 from the Credit Bank to the Social Development Bank. This bank is supported by the Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development like other Islamic banks and financial institutions. In 2000, Zakat Fund allocated nearly 17.5% of its collected budget from Zakat, equal to 2.5 billion SD for the Social Development Bank to finance poor families, enabling them to own the assets of production. The aims of the Credit and Social Development Bank under the umbrella of the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy include:

a) Promotion of the consolidation of the sense of social justice and solidarity, which is known as Takaful among the members of the categories of the beneficiary small producers, craftsmen, students, pension workers adopting referral and marginal interest.

b) Popular participation in investment in ways that benefit the local community through establishment of development councils in different states.

- c) Increasing banking awareness among poor female entrepreneurs and help them in money saving.
- d) Planning and preparation of female microcredit projects as well as training of female entrepreneurs via the bank's women's development directorate, which consists of specialised female staff.
- e) The use of the largest possible portion of available funds in income generating activities and small industries projects for the purpose of increasing household income.

The 1999 Credit and Social Development Bank reports indicate that the total amount allocated in 1997 for the individual family productive projects and social development activities was equal to 940 million Ls (94 million dinnar) for all the bank branches in Northern Sudan. 30% of this amount, equal to 282 million Ls, would be allocated for 164 women, indicating an unequal budget allocation between poor male and female headed households. However, in 1998 a total amount of 426.4 million Ls was allocated for 561 families (Al Awad& Khalafallah 2001:12).

Table 5.5 and Diagram 5.5 below clarify the distribution poor families by northern states. It is clear that the highest number of poor families is located at Sinnar, Blue Nile state, 19,726, followed by Khartoum, 8,000, and Nahar Al Niel state, 3393. The lowest state was Northern Kordufan, 99.

Comparing 5.5 and Diagram 5.6 below that has been compiled from the attached Annex-1 Table 4.18 page 428, it is clear that there is unequal distribution of poor families who were to benefit from the production projects, especially the ones from Kordufan state.

The real incidence of poverty as identified by the MMS 1996 survey needs to be materialised and reflected in the implementation of the NCP Strategy and social solidarity programme. In Kordufan poverty incidence reached 96% in rural areas and 86.5% in urban areas while Khartoum state poverty incident recorded as 76.9% in urban areas and 80% in rural areas.

Table 5.5

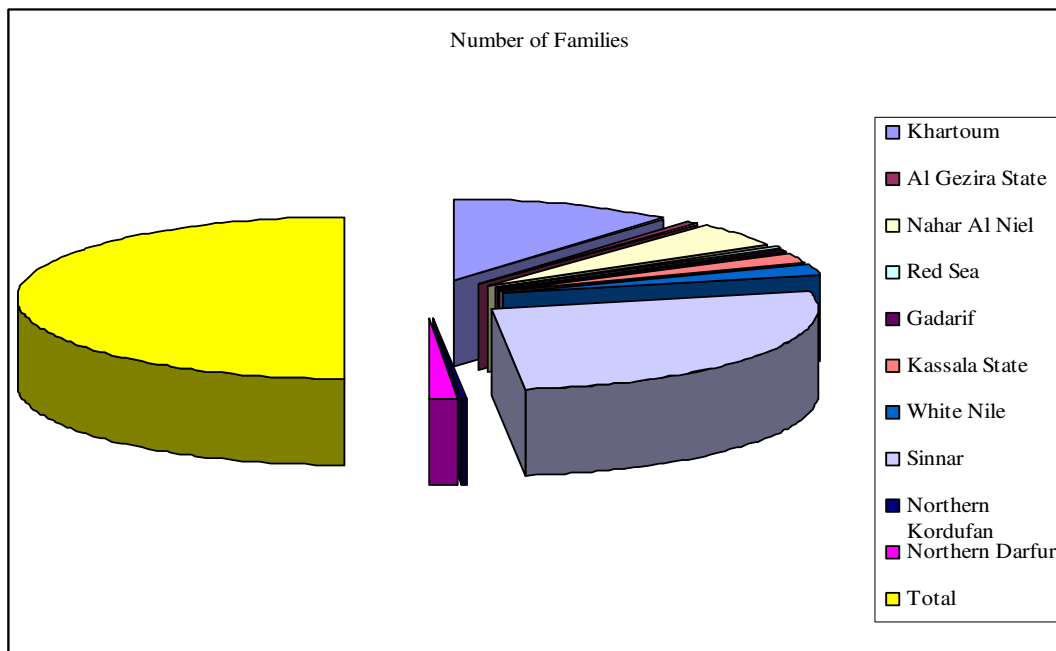
Distribution of Poor Productive Families by Northern State

State	Number of Families
Khartoum	8000
Al Gezira State	563
Nahar Al Niel	3393
Red Sea	320
Gadarif	329
Kassala State	1566
White Nile	1373
Sinnar	19726
Northern Kordufan	99
Northern Darfur	1050
Total	36,419

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001: 12)

Diagram 5.5

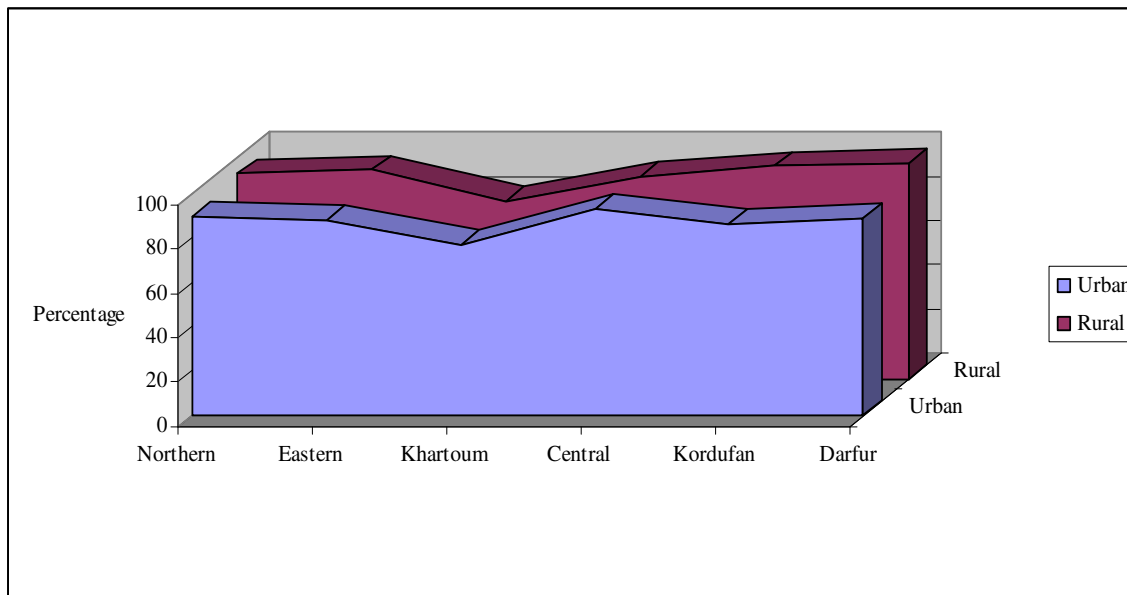
Distribution of Poor Productive Families by Northern States



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001: 12)

Diagram 5.6

Incidence of Poverty by State According to MMS Survey 1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (MMS1996:111)

. . . SudaTel Corporation

In the funding portion of the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Policy, SudaTel Corporation (Sudan Telecommunication) provides funds to help poor families purchase the assets needed for production in the form of a revolving loan fund through the Credit and Social Development Bank.

According to the SWGU Report 2000 the purpose of the SudaTel Corporation revolving loan fund is to assist in the achievement of the following objectives:

1. Increasing the income of the poor families targeted and enabling them to own the assets of production via individual and group microcredit projects.
2. Promoting and developing crafts, small scale projects and other productive activities identified by the targeted organisations.
3. Promoting banking awareness among targeted female entrepreneurs.

4. Building the capacity of the female entrepreneurs target groups through participating in the all phases of the projects cycle. Further information will be explained in section 5.3.4.3 below.
5. Revolving the loans to establish new microcredit projects proposed by the implementing organisations.

Due to the great role played by the Credit and Social Development Bank in poverty eradication and its experience in financing small scale projects, the bank has been commissioned as a partner to execute and follow up the repayment processes of the funded small scale projects. SudaTel Corporation Fund was estimated to be 400,000 dollars (one dollar equal to 258 Sudanese Dinar) or 103,200,000 Sudanese Dinar (SD) in the implementation stage. The distribution of the funds by the state and the NGOs shall be detailed in chapters six and seven.

. . . Other supportive financial institutions

. . . . Agriculture Bank

In 1992, under the national poverty reduction finance mechanism, the Agriculture Bank created the rural women and productive families directorate, strengthening the Comprehensive National Poverty Reduction Strategy (1992- 2002). This directorate achieved an expansion in financial support for rural women and productive families through the branches of the Agricultural Bank. The directorate adopted financial policies for the crafts, professionals and small producers including the productive families sectors. For example, the 1999/2000 policy in which financing rural women and productive families should not exceed 7% of the total fund. Based on the Islamic financial system the Agriculture Bank offers financial services and credits for rural women and productive families with easy and simple conditions for obtaining a loan.

The financial services offered by the Agriculture Bank include:

- This target group of rural women and productive families are exempted from the marginal interest.

- The maximum amount of funding is equal to 3,000,000 SD.
- Use of the Islamic financial mode of Murabaha for such a fund.
- Accepting personal guaranty and guaranty of Social Funds, Unions and other Organisations.

More details in personal and other guarantees will be explained in chapter six.

The size of the fund for rural women and productive families depends on the economic activities in addition to other influenced social, cultural and traditional factors. Therefore, funding this target group requires raising awareness of rural women and poor families. In the course of selecting a suitable financial mechanism, the rural women and productive families directorate prepares the technical and economic studies of models for the agriculture and animal sectors. These models are generalised and distributed for use as standard forms by different Agriculture Bank branches to be executed according to specific bank rules and regulations.

Table 5.6 below represents the distribution of funds allocated for the implementation of the NCPRS (1992- 2002) per state.

Table 5.6

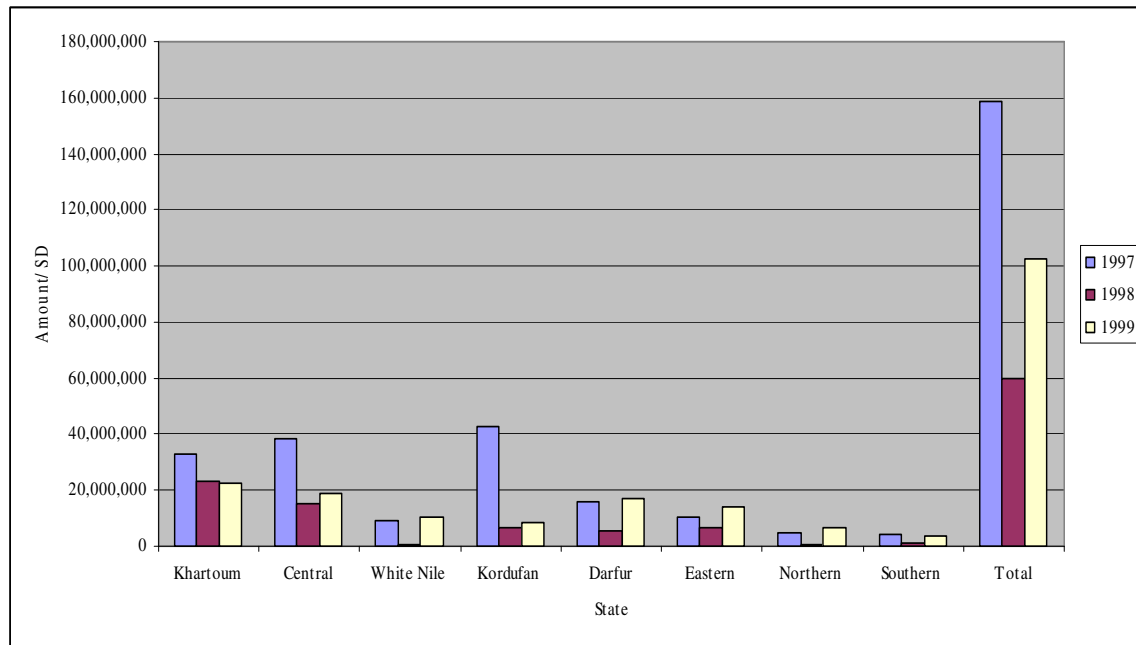
Agriculture Bank Budget Allocated for the Years 1997-1999

State	1997	1998	1999
Khartoum State	33,167,616	23,061,020	22,532,254
Central State	38,355,522	15,148,376	18,683,180
White Nile State	9,257,629	912,600	10,484,266
Kordufan State	42,506,004	6,746,860	8,463,480
Darfur State	15,742,300	5,222,000	17,003,394
Eastern State	10,540,622	6,408,440	14,291,352
Northern State	4,667,647	835,300	6,834,100
Southern State	4,181,187	1,168,558	3,829,193
Total	158,418,527	59,503,154	102,215,219

Source : Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad& Khalafallah 2001: 13)

Diagram 5.7

Agriculture Bank Budget Allocation for the Years 1997-1999



Source : Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad& Khalafallah 2001: 13)

Table 5.6 below represents the distribution of funds allocated for the implementation of the NCPRS (1992- 2002). Comparing this information with the information of the attached Annex-1 Table 4.18 page 428, it is clear that there was unfair distribution of fund allocation between the states with high level of poverty, especially the study areas Khartoum and Kordufan. Kordufan state, where poverty incidence reached 96% in rural areas and 86.5% in urban areas, received 8.46 million SD only while Khartoum state, where poverty incident was recorded as 76.9% in urban areas and 80% in rural areas, received 22.53 million SD. The amount allocated per state is explained in the table below

. . . .2 Al Kifaya Bank

Al Kifaya Bank is a social institution established in 1993 belonging to the Islamic Dahwa'a Organisation (Al Dahwa'a means call for institutionalising religion).It offers its bank services to poor women only and is concerned with the social aspects of women's lives.

The objectives of Al Kifaya Bank:

1. Fostering the idea of women's work.

2. Alleviating poverty via increasing family income.
3. Improving family living conditions.

Al Kifaya Bank's financial policy is based on the financial policy of Zakat Social Development Fund, applying the Islamic financial mode which is called Gard Hassan or loan without interest. Other Al Kifaya Bank services for women include loans without guarantees, provision of economic consultation, educational and cultural programmes, training and skills development. For the implementation of the Comprehensive National Poverty Reduction Strategy, Al Kifaya Bank fund was estimated at 17 million SD, mainly from Zakat Social Development Fund, to reach 5,382 poor families (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:13). SudaTel also financed Al Kifaya Bank and allocated 2,856,650 SD for 200 female microcredit entrepreneurs identified by Islamic Dahwa'a Organisation (Sudan Bank- Governor Office report 2003:2). Al Kifaya Bank works solely with a target group of poor women who work in informal and peripheral services sectors. It offers banking facilities and credit in a sustainable manner without charging interest or requiring guarantees.

. . . . Al Zahra Bank

Al Zahra Bank was established as an agency belonging to Al Baraka Bank (Blessing Bank) in 1992 and then promoted as a branch in 1993. Al Zahra Bank was operated by female officers and provided direct banking services to special categories of women, such as widows and divorcees, to create direct relationships with women in order to offer loans. The total bank credits increased more than four times within two years from 14 million SD in 1996 to reach 60 million SD in 1998 (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:13).

. . Administrative mechanism for family productive policy

To implement the Comprehensive National Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Ministry of Social Development and Welfare created the Social Development Authority based on the state decree No.(13), 1997. Its executive work started in 1998. The Social Development Authority was established to be responsible for the NCPRS and Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme (1998-2000, 2001-2003).

. . . Social Development Authority

The following lines summaries the vision of the Social Development Authority as mentioned by Al Awad & Khalafallah (2001) to address many of the causes of poverty in Sudan

- Reaching the target group for the purpose of reducing the number of poor people and consequently reducing poverty in Sudan.
- Investing in human resource development and basic infrastructure through its poverty development programmes and projects for marginalised target groups.
- Improving the quality of performance of the administrative, financial and data infrastructures to attract donors.
- Concentrating on women's economic empowerment and promotion of female small scale industries.
- Expanding social security for poor people via provision of social insurance.
- Expanding services for microcredit and savings via women's cooperative trust committees.

. . .2 General objectives of the Social Development Authority

The social development objectives include the following:

- Reducing the intensity of poverty
- Spreading a spirit of social solidarity and justice among poor people (Takaful)
- Coordinating all plans and projects and government and NGO efforts
- Establishing a data system for social development and preparation of research and studies
- Selecting poor families and family productive projects and expanding people's participation in the development decision making process.

The social development authority target groups include all the poor families receiving support from Zakat Development Fund with a concentration on female headed households, special group (disabled) and unemployed students. The social development authority gets financial resources from different local and international organisations, including Zakat Fund, State Finance Ministry, people's participation and support, non-government donor organisations

and United Nations development organisations. The policy adopted by the social development authority is a supply package policy. It provides funds to stakeholders and executes capacity building programmes for poverty reduction. The mechanism adopted by the social development authority for implementing their poverty reduction projects at the local level is the establishment of 23 social, productive and training centres distributed at all the states of Sudan. Six of them were executed by the SWGU General Secretariat as part of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects. These centres, adopting popular participatory approaches in their operations, have a hierarchal structure with basic committees (185 committees and ten cooperatives) at grassroots levels for selection of poor families, project proposal preparation with female entrepreneurs, implementation and credit repayment. The study shall illustrate the hierarchal structure of the consultative committees at state and local levels adopted by the SWGU to implement the microcredit projects in Chapter six.

. . . Capacity building and human development strategy

Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme consists of one important component which is capacity building. The capacity building strategy adopted by the social development authority for women in Sudan consists of the following elements:

- Institutional development and capacity building
- Women's training needs identification, adopting bottom- up planning.
- Development of female small scale projects via the social, productive and training centres and grass roots committees
- Concentration on technical and crafts training
- Building administrative and technical skills for women (Provision of computers for women's committees)
- Training women who work in informal sectors for the purpose of empowering them economically and socially

. . . Marketing strategy for savings and microcredit projects

Under the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme propagation is one of the basic factors for the success of the small scale projects, enabling the entrepreneurs to get access to financial support for the implementation of the microcredit projects. Therefore,

the social development authority adopted a propagating and marketing strategy which consists of the following elements:

- Marketing studies
- Propagation through channels of mass media communication
- Provision of the marketing channels
- Contracting with government organisations and private sectors
- Encouraging productive families to participate in internal and external marketing exhibitions via the construction of Puree exhibition in Khartoum. Puree exhibition financed family productive projects by creating marketing channels and assisting rural women with marketing outlets for their products.

The role played by staff members of the SWGU, especially at a local level, through the implementation of the savings and microcredit projects will be discussed in chapter six.

. . . Coordination and relations with related organisations

- Coordinating efforts in all fields with specialised and experienced organisations and research centres to achieve effective and high quality performance.
- Create links and integrate plans with other related national and international institutions and organisations.
- Coordinate with the marginalised small producers and women's organisation sectors.
- Coordinate nationally with ministries and commercial banks that work in the field of development.
- Coordinate with the state ministries in the preparation for Khartoum Plan for Poverty Alleviation.

Working with the United Nations organisations, many development programmes were being implemented, including Women's Training Centre in Sudan at Omdurman, Computer

Training Centre at Omdurman, and preparation of Khartoum State Poverty Eradication Plan. The SWGU General Secretariat has played a prominent role in the coordination process required for the formulation of policy, and the establishment of a plan through their annual conferences creating links with various institutions, banks, NGOs, etc. as detailed in Chapter seven.

. . . Budget for family productive activities

The Budget 1998-2000 of the Social Development Authority National Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme is illustrated in Table 5.7:

Table 5.7

Financial Performance of Implementation of Family
Productive Activities, 1998-2000

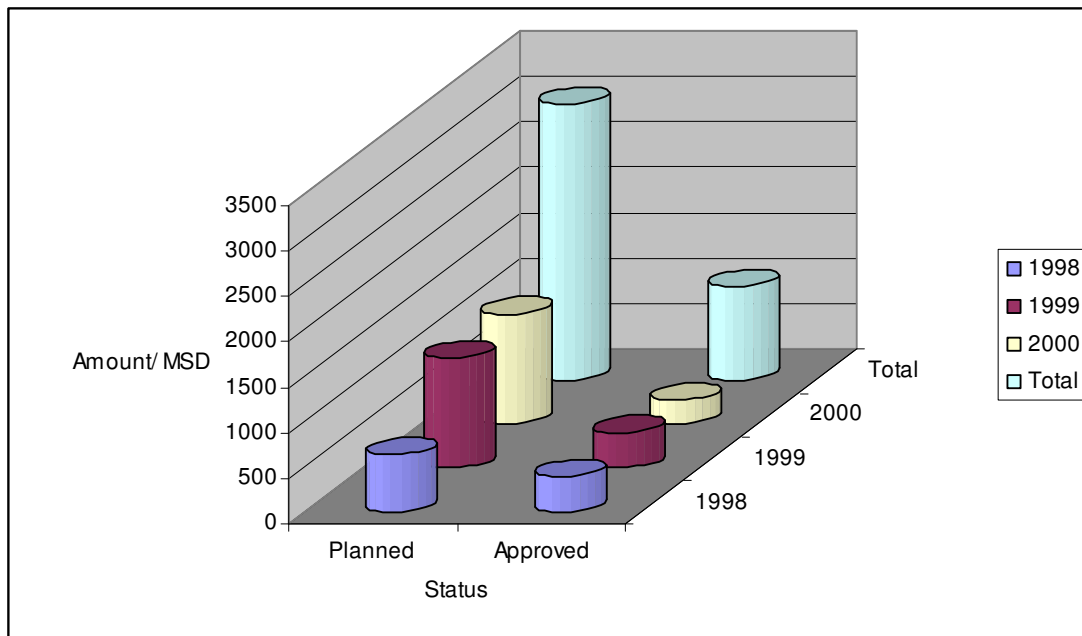
Year	Planned MSD	Approved MSD	% Implementation
1998	621.4	385.3	62
1999	1200	381.1	31.8
2000	1200	258	21.5
Total	3021.4	1024.4	33.9

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from

(Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:14)

Diagram 5.8

Financial Performance of Implementation of Family
Productive Activities, 1998-2000



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:14)

Table 5.8

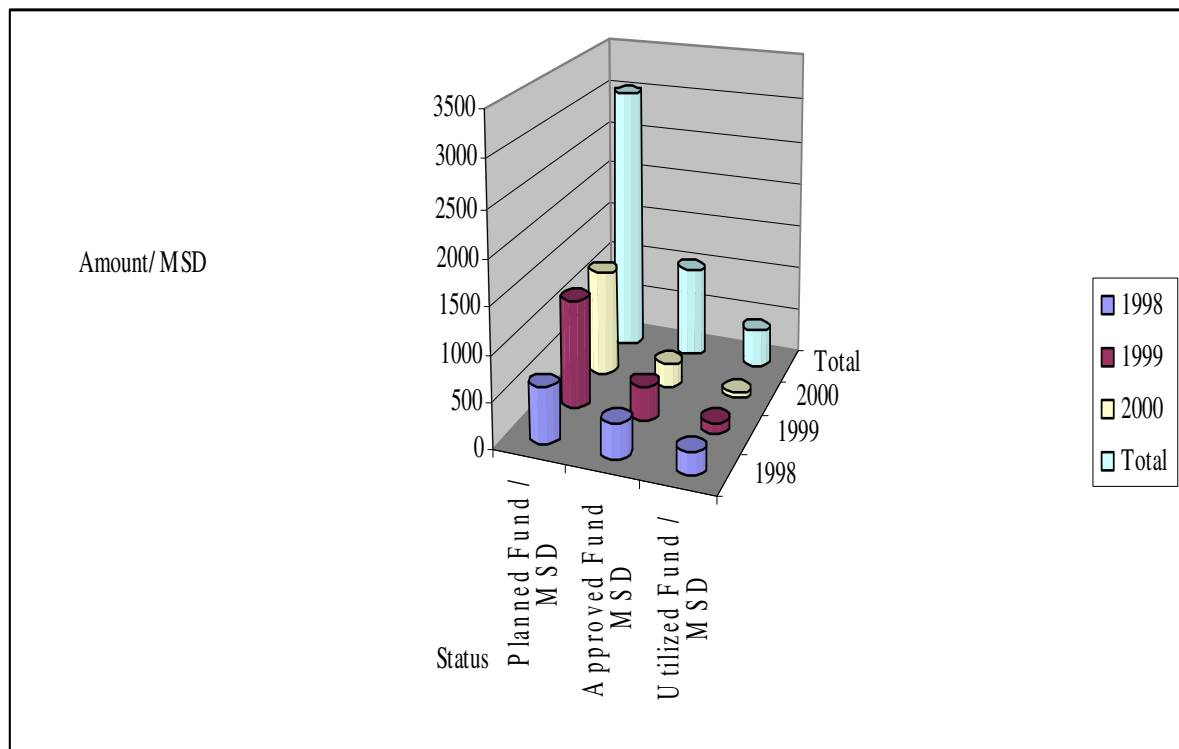
Budget for the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity &
Production Programme, 1998-2000 (Million Sudanese Dinar)

Year	Planned Fund / MSD	Approved Fund/ MSD	Utilised Fund / MSD	Implementation (%)	Unutilised Fund/ MSD	Unutilised Fund (%)
1998	621.4	385.3	238.9	62	146.4	38
1999	1200	381.1	121.1	31.8	260	68.2
2000	1200	258	55.47	21.5	202.35	78.5
Total	3021.4	1024.4	415.47	40.6	608.93	59.4

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:14)

Diagram 5.9

Budget for the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity
& Family Production Programme, 1998-2000



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:14)

Table 5.8 and Diagram 5.9 above indicate that the total amount of funds approved for the implementation of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production programme for the years 1998-2000 was only 1.024 billion SD with a low completion of implementation rate equal to 33.9 % of the planned fund, 3.021 billion SD. The implementation of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme was based on the coordination between different government, non-movement, national and international organisations. From the analysis above and as indicated in the above mentioned table and diagram the budget of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme, which was approved for the implementation of various policies and projects for the general aim of alleviating poverty in Sudan, was equal to 1.02 billion SD. When comparing the approved fund with the percentage of the implementation completed during the three years of the programme, there was a shortfall in the utilisation of the approved fund for the implementation of the poor family productive microcredit projects. This indicates that there was enough funding, estimated to be 608.93 million SD, equal to 59.4% of the approved fund, to implement the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme. These funds were idle and not

used to implement the family productive microcredit projects in time and consequently alleviate poverty conditions among poor women. Since the programme implementation was based on the coordination between different government, non-government, national and international organisations, it appears there was poor coordination and cooperation between other organisations. There were 54 implementing agencies and institutions, government and non-governmental organisations with links to the social development authority for the implementation of poverty reduction projects. SWGU is one of these voluntary NGOs and the allocated fund was not used as planned during the first phase. Thus this situation imposed a real constraint in the fund's utilisation and led to a new implementation strategy by opening the space for SWGU and other NGOs working at a grass roots level and with extended branches at different states to utilise the fund. This shall be illustrated in detail in Chapter six and seven.

These Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programmes tackle poverty from integrated viewpoints which include acquisition of production skills, facilitation of marriage expenses through Al Zwaj Al Jamahi marriage, adult literacy, health, education, electricity and water, as illustrated earlier in this chapter.

Al Awad & Khalafallah (2001:11) mentioned that the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Projects aim to achieve the following qualitative and quantitative objectives:

1. Assist in the reformulation of the Sudanese society as an integrated merciful model through the mobilisation of grassroots level institutions empowered by self sufficiency in making their own development decisions.
2. Encourage the adoption of female small scale enterprises and the promotion of the environmental industries.
3. Develop and encourage female microcredit projects and social safety projects.
4. Take two million families out of the poverty cycle.
5. Develop 30,000 females' capabilities through the ownership of assets of production and the knowledge and administrative skills to manage, produce and market their products.
6. Assist 200,000 female entrepreneurs in the productive families sector to own the assets of production.

. . The Impact of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production programme

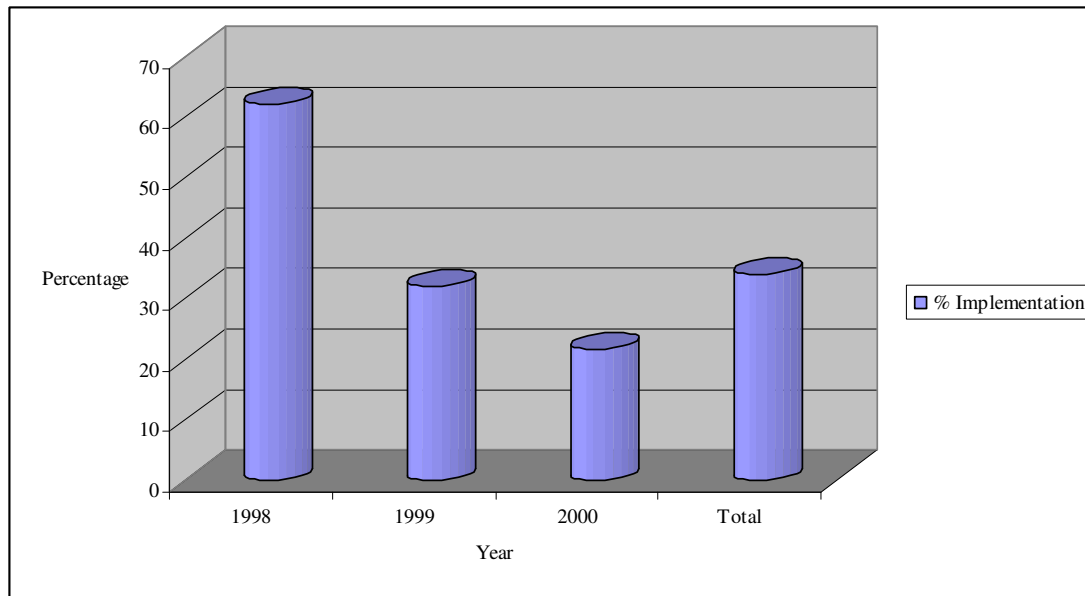
The impact of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production programme, 1998/99-2000, supported by the Social Development Authority, is summarised from Al Awad & Khalafallah (2001:12) and listed below and will be further developed in Chapter six.

- Within three years, from 1998 to 2000, 70% of the total target group of female entrepreneurs was reached.
- The female target group at a grassroots level represents 62% of all beneficiaries of the social development authority.
- 92% of the social training centres were established and functioning.
- Establishment of the Women's Social Development Trust Committee/Consultative Committees at local levels for the implementation of family microcredit projects.
- Female membership in the cooperative trust committees, mostly SWGU staff of state secretariat, equal to 50%.

However, the average percentage of the implementation completed was equal to 38.8% for the three years from 1998-2000. In 1998 the percentage of the implementation completed was high, reaching 62 % and decreasing for the following two years to 38.5 % and 21.5% respectively.

Diagram 5.10

Percentage of Implementation Completed for
Women's Small Scale Projects



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:14)

The major reason is the banks at some states failed to reach the female target groups as mentioned in the Sudan Bank Reports (2003:3) will be discussed in chapter seven.

- Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme adopted both individual and group methodologies to reach rural poor female entrepreneurs. From 1998 to 2000 they implemented small scale projects benefiting 490 families following individual projects and 1,239 families in group projects. These projects include 12 animal production projects benefiting 354 families and 3 agriculture production projects benefiting 234 families. These projects were directed to increase family income and satisfy their basic needs as well as finding job opportunities for poor women.
- Another achievement of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme was the contribution in building the capacity of the staff who worked in delivering the microcredit projects as well as the female Savings and microcredit project entrepreneurs. The provision of a training and capacity building programme in various sectors is illustrated in the following table:

Table 5.9

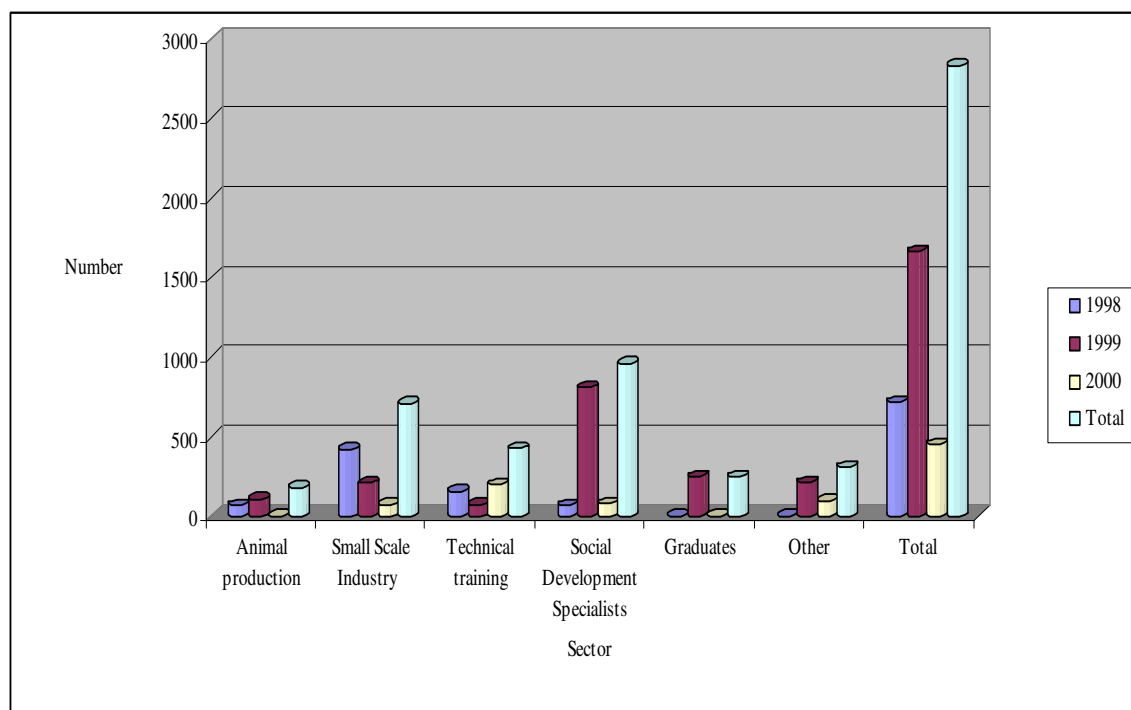
Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme
Capacity Building Programme, 1998-2000

Sector	1998	1999	2000	Total	Percentage
Animal production	70	111	-	181	6.4
Small Scale Industry	422	211	76	709	25
Technical training	155	71	200	426	15
Social Development Specialists	70	809	80	959	33.9
Graduates	-	250	-	250	8.8
Other	-	212	96	308	10.9
Total	717	1664	452	2833	100

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:14)

Diagram 5.11

Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme
Capacity Building Programme, 1998-2000



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad & Khalafallah 2001:14)

Table 5.9 and Diagram 5.11 above indicate that the contribution of the National Poverty Strategy in the capacity building of 2,833 female staff who assisted in the implementation of poverty reduction programme covering five important sectors.

The highest percentage for capacity building of the staff is female social development specialists, 33.9%, followed by small scale industries, 25%, technical capacity training activities, 15%, other, 10.9 %, graduate students, 8.8% and the low percentage is animal production, 6.4%. The table indicates that in 1998 the total number of trainees was 717 representing 25.3% of the total trainees. The percentage increased in 1999 to reach the highest number, 1,664, representing 58.74% of the total trainees. This indicates that in 1999 there was a greater concentration in capacity building than the other years. Finally, in 2000 the number decreased to 452, representing 15.96% of the total number of female trainees.

The major implemented projects are the self sufficient projects for the graduated students to solve the unemployment problem among the graduated students, which reached up to 77% in all the states and the high percentage concentrating in Khartoum state. The total amount for financing the small scale projects for the female students is 1.5 million SD and the size of the loan is equal to 30,000 SD per a student. 270 projects were implemented for 393 students or 78.6% of the total target group of 500 students. Many different local organisations participated in the implementation of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme including the SWGU savings and microcredit projects. There were seven national projects implemented under the programme with national and international funds. 25% - 40% of the total fund was allocated to women's development and income generation projects. The role of the SWGU in these projects will be further studied in Chapter six.

. Conclusion

As it comes in this chapter there have been notable gains and achievements in the area of women and the family mainly in being recognized by the decision makers and for the allocation of financial resources to assist them alleviate their family poverty conditions. The construction programmes, social solidarity and the family production programmes still facing challenges. These include the financial resources allocated for socio-economic activities have been inadequate. The financial institutions are not accessible to all poor families. Development of the skills of the personnel who implement the productive programmes and material resources have been in short supply. Horizontal and vertical coordination between different sectors like health, education, welfare and social development etc. has been inadequate, with overlapping areas of competence. This has also been supported by the SMDGs R (2005) The main weakness of the NCS is that it lacks coherence, being the work of different sectoral teams who made few efforts to establish horizontal or vertical integration (SMDGs R 2005:36). Although the mechanism was set up to implement the NCS but still the institutional frameworks and mechanisms in the area of women and the family are weak.

Next chapter will deal with the SWGU as one of the civil society organizations that has been enlisted as active participants in the successive stages of the implementation of the NCS as well as the strategic planning of the new 25-year national strategy for women advancement which will link desertification with poverty, food insecurity and environmental protection (SMDGs R 2005:36).

Also the chapter will highlights the role of the SWGU in using of the gains made by Sudanese women and the social, political and economic progress they have achieved as a basis for further efforts aimed at completing the task of building an appropriate legislative structure, safeguarding the rights of women and the family, and promoting their role in strengthening the foundations of peace and development. This will be supported by the reinforcement of the process of coordination, mutual consultation and partnership in decision- making among official and volunteer institutions, civil society organizations at national, state and local levels

Chapter Six: Sudanese Women's General Union

. Introduction

The centrality of gender, participation and governance issues in sustainable poverty reduction have long been recognised by some international development agencies such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to connect gender, poverty, and governance issues as its contribution to the Beijing +5 initiatives. It has been noted that

The current literature on governance tends to conflate goals, and assume positive links between, on the one hand, governance and poverty reduction and, on the other, between poverty reduction and gender disadvantage (Baden 1999: 27).

As discussed in chapter four it has been shown that gender and poverty linkages have been re-examined in the light of the so-called feminization of poverty trend that imply having greater number of women who are poorer than men, the severity or degree of poverty experienced by women is worse than men's and more women are falling below the poverty line because of an increased number of female heads of households. Therefore, this chapter will deal with the emergence of the Sudanese Women's General Union (SWGU) as an extension to the Sudanese women's movement for the women's empowerment and its role in the integration of women in setting of the long term Quarter Century Strategy for the Advancement of Women (2003-2027) which will guide government and non-government agencies in responding to women's empowerment issues, and thus gender mainstreaming that has been officially become an important agenda of the national and local governments.

The role of SWGU in creating the necessary hierarchal structure to facilitate women's participation in socio-economic and political development, establishment of appropriate institutions, creation of links with all ministries, academic institutions, NGOs, and others at national as well as at grassroots levels will be discussed in detail. This will be followed by an analysis of the role of the SWGU and its collaborative efforts with other institutions and NGOs in analysing Sudanese women's socio-economic situation and the formulation of the first strategy for women's advancement in Sudan and its inclusion as a component in the Comprehensive National Poverty Reduction Strategy. This will include the efforts of the SWGU in acquiring financial resources from the financial institutions that work as partners

for the implementation and management of the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Programmes.

Sudanese women have a deeply rooted history and a distinctive political, economic and social role in the Sudan. The Sudanese Women's General Union and its associations have descended from the Sudanese people's liberation movement against colonisation to ensure women's participation in the struggle.

During 1899–1956 Sudan was proclaimed a condominium under British-Egyptian administration. Although maintaining the appearance of joint administration, the British Empire formulated policies and supplied most of the top administrators. Before the independence of January, 1956, the Sudanese political parties and their affiliated women's groups reconciled and worked for independence with different ideological concepts such as:

- Anti-Colonial Front: win independence for the country without creating any coalition with Egypt or Britain.
- Umma Party: win independence for the country and join the Commonwealth League (British).
- National Unionist Party: win independence for the country and create a federal union with Egypt.

The Anti-Colonial Front recognised the political role of women in the history of Sudan and encouraged women to establish the Sudanese Women's Union (SWU) in 1952. The SWGU's membership was composed of a large number of educated pioneering women. When the colonisers noticed the pioneering women's political role in the national liberation movement, they tried to establish a parallel group consisting of a few educated women and the wives of political leaders affiliated with Umma and the National Unionist Party. These women attempted to thwart the SWGU's efforts, but without success. Later on they joined the SWU.

In 1970 the May Regime was prompted by the SWU to approve the expansion of health, education and social services along with electricity, water and roads. It appointed the first woman as State Minister and others to top positions in the regime's single party, the Sudan Socialist Union. Women joined the Armed Forces, the Police and Prison authorities as

officers. In particular they worked in military hospitals as nurses and doctors, in police and prison authorities as psychologists and social workers.

In 1983 the May Regime changed direction and reversed its socialist-oriented policies, adopting Sharia law. The regime banned the SWU, arrested its leaders, overtook its properties and dismissed its members and killed or detained their husbands. In addition, as analysed in Chapter 5, the benefits gained earlier in political and other social welfare provisions were undermined by the stagnation of the economy. The only women's organisation to gain from these developments was Raidat al-Nahda , the female wing of the Muslim Brotherhood/National Islamic Front (NIF) party, whose members advocated gender discrimination on the grounds that a woman's ideal role in society was that of a wife and mother. 'This association did not have a clear vision for women's economic, political and social rights and applied religion, cultural rules and concerned with the family affairs and happy family life'(Badri, Hajah quoted in Nogdallah:1999:50).

Concerning the women's movement in Sudan Nogdallah (1999:51) mentioned that the May Regime was overthrown in the April 1985 uprising, the SWU returned to public life, but the succeeding years of multi-party rule did not bring substantial advances over past achievements that might have been expected due to the nature of the multi-parties system the SWU did not obtained full dynamic mobility and did not have sufficient budget to implement its projects (Nogdallah1999:51).

In June 1989 the National Islamic Front/Salvation Revolution Government seized power and put an immediate ban on other political parties, unions and associations. The ban extended to the Sudanese Women's Union and to women's participation in public life. Thus the Sudanese Women's Union, the oldest and largest grassroots women's organisation, which had struggled for political rights for women since 1954, was dissolved immediately after the Salvation Revolution Government in 1989. However, and as it explained in the SWGU publication: SWGU (2000a:4) the Sudanese Women's General Union established in January 1990 from the support received from the Salvation Revolution Government as a women's institution for achieving women's rights and to participate in economic development, cultural progress and politics under the ideology of a one ruling party system. Thus establishment of SWGU as a non government institution has been given a priority to guarantee the integration of women and gender concerns in poverty reduction programmes. The lead was taken by the Ministry of

Welfare for Social Development – Women Directorate to respond to the government or the state’s call for the integration of women in development planning in general and in poverty reduction programmes in particular (as mentioned in the previous chapter).

This chapter will also focus on the processes, strategies and substantive outcomes of integrating gender considerations in poverty alleviation plans (1992-2002) within the state at national and provincial levels. Critical issues addressed are: How do states govern when they mainstream gender and women’s concerns in poverty alleviation efforts How do women relate and respond to such efforts by the state How is participatory and strategic gender planning towards women’s empowerment integrated in poverty reduction efforts

The Sudanese Women’s General Union Report (2000a:4) is regarded as the largest coordinating body for Sudanese women’s non-governmental at national, state and grassroots levels with branches extending all over Sudan. The SWGU, with its grassroots broad based organisations, is open to all Sudanese women as well as other women of NGOs or women's directorates of other government organisations, ministries etc... to facilitate the integration of women in development activities by mobilising them to analyse issues and identify needs at grassroots levels, then submit their analyses to state and national levels for further planning and coordination.

As it explained in the SWGU publication SWGU (2000a:5), the political and social voluntary work in Sudan has been considered as a principle by the Islamic Values and had been reflected in many Sudanese Women’s Organisations work since 1944 when the women's club was established in Madani city- Blue Nile state by some Sudanese women who were wives of some employers and ladies married to foreign men. This was followed by the establishment of Omdurman Women Cultural Society in 1947 as a basis for the Sudanese women’s organisation which reflects part of the Sudanese people's beliefs and social values that call for women's support and assistance. As Muslims this voluntary work is reflected in being generous and kind toward weak and poor people, especially women, as well as sharing their sadness, hardship and sacrifice, to the extent that you offer what you own, even if you are in need yourself. All these characteristics support the SWGU’s role in formulating the social solidarity philosophy and collective action which is accepted by the patriarchal society. This social solidarity philosophy is a basis for mobilising the society for the family production programmes to empower women and alleviate poverty in Sudan (SWGU2000a:5). Finding

financial resources to support the implementation of the SWGU women's strategy is also guided by this philosophy. The religious concept behind adopting this philosophy is that the use of Zakat fund and other credit by poor families will later enable these poor families to earn income and become Zakat givers instead of Zakat receivers (World Bank Report:2003:50). More details will be explained in chapter 5: Regularity and poverty policy: point 5.3.3.1 Zakat Social Solidarity Fund. According to this philosophy the cycle of getting access to finance will be rotated, moving and pulling with it thousands of poor families each year from the poverty cycle to a good life. Based on the above mentioned philosophy, SWGU and other civic organisations work actively as partners to the government for poverty alleviation and improving household life.

Important socio-economic development work is concentrated in charity, including sponsorship of orphans, provision of social insurance, taking care of displaced people and prisoners, celebrating special occasions like Eid, Ramadan and other national celebrations. Economic work consists of provision of inputs of production for women, provision of financial resources through Quard Hassan and other revolving loan funds with or without interest, provision of sufficient support for poor women to have their own group and individual family productive projects, in addition to capacity building projects and training courses related to income generation and women's small scale projects. Recently the SWGU has gone further in this direction by the establishment of the SWGU Women's Business Club as an organised and institutionalised union with its own specialisation. Business women are organised to facilitate discussion of work issues at national and international levels. This union works like a business women's chamber of commerce with a secretariat established in 1993. Its membership consists of 300 women owned economic and investment enterprises in different sectors like industry, trade, service and agriculture and it owns 95% of the women's readymade clothing factories (SWGU:2000a:29).

It is important to highlight some background information about the emergence of the SWGU, the Sudanese Women's General Union Charter as well as SWGU objectives and its structures that ensure the integration of women in the poverty reduction strategy by the implementation of the Comprehensive National Poverty Reduction Programmes.

.2 Sudanese women charter

Sudanese Women's General Union is a volunteer national foundation registered with the Commissioner of Humanitarian Aid in the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and is a member of the Sudan Council for Voluntary Associations of NGOs. The Sudanese Women's General Union works for promotion of equity and justice in rights and duties among its community members to empower women socially, economically and politically. The SWGU works to strengthen the spirit of unity among women and builds their abilities to improve the situation of women in Sudan (SWGU 2004b:2). Having this identity has been set in ground to let Sudanese women participate in poverty reduction and poverty alleviation strategy and programmes. The development of a comprehensive program that will empower women for long-term success in improving their situation vis- -vis men and eventually, in eliminating poverty has been achieved through directing the women development activities into two dimensions:

- Poverty reduction or sustainable poverty reduction that has been understood as an individual problem and poverty alleviation imply the reduction of the number of people who are poor. Zakat Social Development Fund family production and microcredit projects. To have sustainable poverty reduction therefore refers to the systematic or programmatic attempts to increase the number of people who are able to get out of poverty, and sustain that success over long periods of time for the eventual goal of poverty eradication or elimination, the ultimate target of human development as has been discussed in chapter five and will be discussed in the following chapters.
- Poverty reduction or gender strategic planning that has been understood as a community problem and a function of building social capital and participatory governance mechanisms such as having institutional structures for the lessening of suffering by the poor or slight improvement of the conditions under which they live. It refers to the institutional framing and implementation of policies, programs and projects at various levels of society national, state and local levels that contribute to the reordering or reconstruction of gender identities and relations between women and men as it will be discussed in this chapter.

Both sustainable poverty reduction and strategic gender planning adopted by the Ministry of welfare and Social Development would require the cooperation between government, organisations of poor people, non-government organisations, and the rest of civil society. In feminist literature, Vargas and Wieringa (1998:2-23) called this cooperative relationship triangle of empowerment , involving women's movements, feminist politicians and feminist public administrators. Hence, the governance component of poverty reduction refers to how the relationship between government, civil society, and poor people is altered or maintained in the course of the governments' poverty reduction efforts. Participatory governance refers to the transformation of relationships between rulers and the ruled in ways that recognise and respect women's choices and autonomy, and that include more accountable, participatory-based, and egalitarian (equal in rights) political practices.

The coordination body has been chosen to be the SWGU and its members' selection has been done through free election in which all government and NGO members participated. The SWGU consists of the general secretary, three assistant secretaries and another ten committees in addition to the consultancy council which observes and follows up on the union's performance.

In 1989 the government made a decision about the importance of women's participation in strategic planning for the socio-economic and political activities and called for a conference in 1990 to negotiate women's participation in strategic planning. During the 1990 conference more than one thousand women representing 19 states gathered to participate and discuss new strategies for women's participation in public affairs and mainly in poverty reduction strategy. This led to the formation of SWGU structural proposals and a list of the 1990 conference steering committee members. In 1990 the Sudanese Women's General Union (SWGU) was formed and emerged to formulate and legalise a Sudanese Women's General Union constitution. This constitution would describe members' ambitions to be at the forefront of a society that works for women's promotion and development. Within two and a half years, organisational structure at all levels was in place. The SWGU soon became the core planning advisor and coordinator between the other corporations which had the same interest in women's development at a national level. The recommendations of the conference concerning the women's strategy will be discussed below.

The role of the Sudanese Women's General Union in bringing national unity is governed by a charter which includes the following five principles as illustrated in details in the SWGU Publication (2004b:1-14) and listed in the following lines:

.2. Article principle of political participation

The SWGU Charter, 1998 is based on the 1998 Sudan Constitution Decrees that have given women equal rights without discrimination in terms of sex or race. According to Article 21 of the 1998 Sudan Constitution which stipulates that all Sudanese are equal before the law regarding their rights and duties and no discrimination regarding sex, religion or wealth is allowed (SWG:2004b:1). Such discrimination and women's unequal opportunities in political representation were already discussed in Chapter 4.

To ensure their participation in political life, the Charter has to ensure the retention of 25% of the seats for women in the National Assembly. Recently the SWGU has been working hard to get 30% of the seats at the parliament, special and indirect election for women representatives at scientific and professional levels and 10% minimum representation at grassroots level popular committees.

There is a low level of women's representations in the legislative and executive system. For example, in the federal ministerial level there are only four women beside a few female ministers at the state level. Moreover, only one woman took the position of Governor (Wali) of state. However, during the period 1990-1995 the SWGU got concerned with organising conferences in all states constituencies to mobilise professional and academic women inside and outside the country to discuss various women's issues and concerns (SWG:2000a:2). Some of these conferences are the Education Conference, Peace and Unity Conference and The Role of Women in Sudan Salvation Revolution Conference.

.2.2 Article 2 principle of the family

As discussed in the SWGU Publication (2004b:1) the SWGU charter with regard to the principle of the family is based on the Islamic Sharia of Personal and Custom Laws that govern family life by dissemination of Islamic awareness among Muslim women. These laws guide women to develop the Muslim woman's identity, in terms of respecting their husbands

at all times in all situations, or behaving and dressing modestly as a way to maintain purity. To assist women in overcoming injustices and to emancipate them from all degrading practices incompatible with their religious values, SWGU strengthens the ties of co-operation and mutual assistance with Islamic Institutions to support poor Muslim women and improve their economic condition. SWGU works to deepen the concern about Muslim family affairs and works toward the values of justice, equity, equality and upright conduct, rejecting discrimination, oppression and war. In 2007 the SWGU managed to gain the family right to obtain Sudanese nationality for children born from Sudanese mothers and foreign fathers.

.2. Article principle of sustainable development and human rights

The same reference of the SWGU Publication (2004b:2) mentioned that all labour legislation is based on complete equality as regards the rights and duties of both women and men with due consideration for a woman's situation as a mother and wife. The 1998 Constitution reinforced the earlier 1973 Constitution's wording about equal employment opportunities for all Sudanese and no discrimination due to gender, race and religion. The provisions governing employment appear in legislation and regulations, namely the Labour Act 1997. Such legislation is promulgated in accordance with the International and Arab Agreements. The SWGU Publication (2004b:2) discussed that the SWGU principle of sustainable development & human rights attempts to ensure that women in Public Service are not discriminated and have:

- equal wages for equal employment.
- free job competition based on competency, qualification and experience
- equality regarding pension benefits
- training as employment prerequisite for all employees.
- equality regarding rights to leave and holidays with due consideration for women's special requirement as child bearers.

Recognising the role of women and their contribution to development, the state formulated a national women's committee and established a Women in Development (WID) unit early in the year 1973 followed by a number of WID units in different institutions. The SWGU tries to coordinate the development activities of these WID units both in governmental and non-governmental organisations to eliminate bias against women in order to attain equality in

different spheres of life. As discussed in chapter four, many issues related to the application of labour force laws and discrimination still need to be tackled.

.2. Article principle of education and health

The same SWGU Publication (2004b:3) discussed the principle of education and health as human rights especially for girls' education. In the field of education, which is the linchpin in building the Sudanese nation and society, the SGWU ensured the adoption of a universal and compulsory primary education policy where both girls and boys are enjoined to stay in school with government support. The SWGU also persuaded the government to give considerable support to higher education and university students and special recognition and attention to the fields of science and technology. Concerning informal schooling, SWGU plays a great role in launching illiteracy eradication classes. More than 7,770 classes had been launched up to 2004. In addition, SWGU has succeeded in opening 727 Quranic schools (*Khalawi*) for women's education and 3,830 kindergartens. However, the educational issues discussed in Chapter 3, such as absenteeism and dropping out, leading to homeless children and low levels of enrolment in basic education, especially among females, needs more effort by the SWGU to find solutions.

The SWGU Publication (2004b:3) discussed that the SWGU has also committed itself to the goals of health for all, adopting the primary health care approach and giving more attention to the health of pregnant and lactating women and children, environmental hygiene, midwifery centre construction, vaccination campaigns for children and to combat harmful habits and practices against women, such as female circumcision. These health projects are clearly indicated in the attached Anex-1: Chart 6.1 page 444-450 Matrix Plan for the Economic Development Secretariat - Sudanese Women General Unions: 1999- 2005, the projects include health insurance and the rehabilitation of health units and other health services like vaccine campaigns and fighting against children's diseases and mortality, first aid and nutrition. These projects reflect the priority given by the SWGU to the fields of education and health.

.2. Article principle of peace and security

The SWGU Publication (2004b:10) gives primary attention to the obstacle of armed conflict that has threatened the passage of Sudanese women to attaining development and progress. There is no progress or development without peace. Women in Sudan, especially in the south and Nuba Mountain, are more concerned with bringing peace since they have been the most affected during the last thirty four years. For this reason, the SWGU sees the participation of women in peace-making as an essential tool for achieving socio-economic and political development.

According to UNIFEM (2005:4) peace-building has three important dimensions: political development; security sector reform and social and economic development. All three dimensions will need to be considered as integrated parts in the implementation of the peace agreement. The role of the SWGU like other civil society and NGOs will be vital in the peace building in Sudan and should include:

- as watchdogs – to monitor the political process, to expose gaps between rhetoric and reality;
- as advocates – as the voice of the poor and the weak. The international community can help to amplify their message and make sure that their rights are taken into account where decisions are made;

- as actors in the field – in the delivery of development and relief assistance

So far the SWGU has been able to raise women's issues by bringing direct attention to the needs of women and girls as victims of armed conflict. In accordance with the research on war-displaced girls and women, a number of income-generating activities and microcredit projects for family resettlements have been established by the SGWU. Accordingly financial resources have been allocated to assist poor women in some southern and western states. SWGU has advocated for Sudanese women's participation in decision-making processes and peace negotiations, resulting in women now having been presented in all government mechanisms for peace and a woman has been appointed as a Minister of Peace in one of the states in the conflict areas in the south. Moreover, women's strong influence has been reflected in the international conference in Maastricht, which took place in April 2000. According to the SWGU Publication (2004b:3) and based on the SWGU Plan 1999-2005, attached to Annex-1: Chart 6.1 Pages 444-450, that translated the SWGU objective of promoting women's participation in the peace process, as it will be mentioned below, by establishing the SWGU structures to facilitate the democratic process of decision making, and

directing the financial resources to implement the savings and microcredit projects in Sudan southern states, Darfur and Kordufan, one can say that these tools can contribute to the empowerment of displaced, homeless refugees and poor women and trickle up their needs. This chapter and chapter 8 will explain in detail the SWGU attempts of working hard to be adherent to the Maastricht declaration and endeavour to have a sound peace and security action plan to apply this principle.

SWGU Publication (2004b:10) stresses that in 1990 a conference was held to discuss new strategies for women's participation in public affairs. Thousands of women have discussed women's situations in different aspects of life social, cultural, political and economical and they came up with very realistic ideas on how to improve and develop women's situations. As it has been discussed in the SWGU Publication (2004b:10) from this conference recommended the establishment of the SWGU the 1990 conference has had lots of recommendations, most important of all is the establishing of the voluntary women's union (SWGU 2004b:10) with its proposed structure, strategy of work and programmes to protect women's rights, the mobilisation of women and coordination with all government apparatus to implement all the conference recommendations (SWGU 2000a: 11). All these principles of the SWGU are reflected in the previous chapter: chapter five which discusses the integration of the women's development policy in Sudan with its main pillars of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy such as political, economic, health, education, human rights and peace & conflict principles for the planning and development of poverty reduction programmes.

. Objectives

The SWGU Publication (2004b:3) explains in detail the Sudanese Women's General Union (SWGU) objectives that are required to successfully empower women and implement the poverty reduction strategy and other development programmes in the following points:

- promote women's position in political, social, and economic development.
- reinforce and support women's rights.
- promote the participation of women in national development.
- influence development policies affecting women to ensure the realisation of women's popular participation, consultation (Shura), equity and justice.

- organise and mobilise women at grassroots levels towards national construction.
- encouraging cooperation between women in Sudan with other countries.
- assist in poverty elimination and eradication of harmful traditional practices.
- decrease the rate of ignorance among women and increase religious education and guidance and national education.
- look after families, especially the poor mothers and the children.
- promote women's participation in the peace process.
- assist in promoting women's participation in decision making by creating a conducive legal environment and to enable women to take initiatives to build Sudanese society.

These short and long term objectives are realistic and proceed in harmony with the National Poverty Reduction Strategy that had been discussed in chapter five, reflecting the directions adopted by the SWGU to implement poverty reduction strategy. The SWGU is now playing a prominent role in strategic planning & coordination Planning and coordination between all other women's organisations and societies (SWG2004b:9-10) and in the mobilisation for Social Solidarity and Family Production Programme at a national level with other women's organisations, as well as at state and local levels as it was mentioned in chapter five: regulatory poverty policy as well as in this chapter and the following chapter.

According to the SWGU Report (SWGU 2000:10) savings and microcredit projects consist of microcredit which means small loan made to poor women who are regarded as bad financial risks, by conventional banks, as they have insufficient savings or assets to obtain a loan. Despite the diversity of definitions the word microcredit used by SWGU means: small size loans, shorter repayment periods, flexible and easy to understand regulations on loans, small scale activities based on local conditions and needs, clients are small entrepreneurs and low-income households and loans used to generate income and develop enterprises.

Sudatel financial institution provides individual credits/ loans services and follows the conventional bank system rules for these microcredit projects and known as savings and microcredit projects. And Zakat Social Development Fund provides individual or group credits/ loan known as RLF projects. RLF projects are different from the savings and microcredit in the mode of interest (free of interest), provision of technical knowledge and the selection of the female entrepreneurs. Both savings and microcredit projects and RLF projects

follow the financial mechanism of revolving the fund after the repayment of the credit/ loan for the saving purposes.

RLF are offered for groups of female entrepreneurs (Production Centers) or individual female entrepreneurs. In this study samples it is offered to two groups (Fetihab and milk production groups). And as individual project it is provided for informal sector Tea Sellers using new technology. For group female entrepreneurs more advanced technical knowledge and advanced equipments were used to move the female entrepreneurs from using traditional technology to adopt new methods of production.

Revolving loan projects is same as any micro-finance programmes/ projects in a sense that the underlying rationales are the following: the project activities operate on the principle of group-based lending, commonly referred to as 'solidarity groups' who selected by the local committees. They consist of small and homogeneous borrower groups (Khalawi women), jointly liable for loans, with varying degrees of participation in project management. Joint responsibility and liability for loans enhance accountability and result in a higher rate of repayment than the standard bilateral loan agreements of SudaTel formal financial system. Credit/ loan disbursement is organized on the principle of 'social collateral,' where borrowers' reputation or the social networks to which they belong take the place of traditional physical or financial collateral

For both kinds of savings and microcredit enterprises or RLF (individual/ group) female entrepreneurs get the microcredit/ loan first and after the repayment the credit/ loan will be used by the SWGU fund for the purpose of saving and increasing the number of the women beneficiaries or borrowers. By this way the SWGU Fund or Mahfazat Al Marra'a has been established and functioning at each state where the savings and microcredit projects are implemented. And gradually the SWGU becomes a microcredit service provider to allow poor women get access to microcredits.

By implementing these savings and microcredit projects one can say that the SWGU will be working towards the socio-economic development to strengthen and empower women's economic position. This will gradually enable them to tackle some of the social welfare issues and then achieve political empowerment. For the short term, objectives such as economic

progress will attract more women, especially at grassroots levels, and reactivate women's associations and the SWGU basic secretariats. Then eventually the SWGU will return to work for the long term objective of invading the political sphere when all its structures will be institutionalised in all Sudan states and functioning well at grassroots levels as it will be seen in the following chapters and from the performance of the microcredit & savings projects.

. **Structure**

The following paragraphs are based on the SWGU Publication (2005:4-6) that explains the structure of the SWGU, which facilitates the process of women's participatory democracy, strategic planning and implementation of poverty reduction programmes headed by the General Secretariat at the federal level which is elected directly by women members in an open congress. The same process happens at the state and grassroots levels.

To guarantee the smooth running of the SWGU development activities at national, state and local levels, the organisational structure, as illustrated in attached Annex-1: Chart 6.2 page 451 as follows:

. . **General / National Congress**

The congress, held every three years, and in some cases every two years, by more than 1,000 women members representing all Sudanese states, with the participation of ministries, societies, associations and women's NGOs, will approve the women's and the general plan and review the performance and financial reports, as well as elect the General Secretariat of the Advisory/Consultative Council.

. .2 **Advisory/Consultative Council**

The Consultative/Advisory Council is composed of 130 members, consisting of the chairperson, deputy chairperson, and the general secretariat members, one representative from each state (26), and members appointed by the president from various ministries, universities, academic institutions and NGOs. Consultative council members meet every six months to approve the detailed work plan and the membership of the General Secretariat.

. . General Secretariat

The General Secretariat Chairperson is elected directly from the National Congress and heads and represents the General Secretariat and speaks in the name of the federation in all forums. The General Secretariat exists at the grassroots, local and state levels. The duration of the General Secretariat at the local level is for two years, while for the state and national level it is four years. The general secretariat of the SWGU is composed of eight specialised secretariats that have been tracking the implementation of the Sudan Comprehensive National Strategy at all levels. These specialised secretariats include Political, Social, Economic, Education, Health, Resource Development, Culture, Information and Public Relations.

. . General Assistance for Resource Development

The Secretariat-General represents all the Sudanese women in 26 states. Each state comprises a number of provinces and for each province and rural council there is a branch of the SWGU.

. . Economic Development Secretariat

SWGU Publication (2004b:5) mentioned that the aim of the Economic Development Secretariat is to enhance women's participation in economic activity by developing the abilities and skills of rural women to produce and achieve security in food supplies for the household. The aim is to develop women's abilities to possess skills and to give encouragement to rural women to produce and achieve the food security between women and increase women's participation in economical activity.

These development projects include:

- Women's savings and microcredit projects
- Khalawi women supporting revolving loan funds for microcredit projects
- Displacement and resettlement projects
- Al- Mshiekhat (female religious activists) project for southern women's skills development
- creative rural women's prize project has been adopted by the SWGU based on the outcome of summit held in Geneva the year 1992. It helps in raising the standard of the economic situation for rural women and to get use of presidents' wives personal commitment to push forward efforts to help rural women (SWGU: 2004c: 2) as well as the wives of the states' governors (Walis). In 1999 41 rural women (individual & groups) applied for the prize and

only 16 individual rural women and one group awarded the prize, in 2000 out of 40 only 7 individual rural women and 3 groups were awarded the prize, in 2001 out of 42 only 8 individual rural women and two groups and in 2002 out of 62 only 17 individual rural women and two groups were awarded the prize. Although there is an increase in the number of rural women participating in these events the number of women awarded the prizes is still less. Also group work at social development centres or associations needs to be encouraged to award more prizes.

. . Social Secretariat

The aim of the Social Secretariat is to promote women's social activities for their families as well as society by instilling national education, missionary work and Ramadan Breakfast to revive joint liability values, cooperation and collaboration values through provision of social services. These social activities include Al-Tlimra council programmes, Al Sadegat Droop, Al Khalawi support and other religious festivals.

. . Education Secretariat

The aim of Education Secretariat is to facilitate equivalent opportunities for girls' education and reduce the illiteracy rate among women by formulating educational plans for improving the educational curriculum and executing literacy and religious classes. In addition, the Education Secretariat supports poor students to encourage them to continue their education.

. . The Health Secretariat

The Health Secretariat works for the improvement of family health conditions, especially for mothers and children, by launching environmental hygiene programmes, controlling and combating harmful habits and children's diseases.

. .9 The Culture Secretariat

The Culture Secretariat works to enrich and maintain Sudanese culture and good practices by stimulating women's creativity. It is concerned with celebrating important occasions,

conducting national exhibitions, special evenings of arts and poetry, national singing and band formation.

. . 0 Research, Information and Statistic Secretariat

The aim of this secretariat is to maintain an information database about Sudanese women's activities by establishing the Union Public Library, a documentation of women's history and lives. In 1995 an information and public relations committee was established to take care of finding employment opportunities for Culture and Information graduates. This committee also uses mass media channels to make women aware of their rights, their role in the community and the SWGU programmes.

. . Political Secretariat

The Political Secretariat is responsible for organising women's conferences in all states and at all levels, formation of specialised secretariats at all states and preparation for the general election in all the states' constituencies.

The same secretariats exist at the state level and, according to the SWGU's recent statistics, the SWGU organisational structure includes more than four million volunteer women as members and has more than 27,000 base branches at local levels through which more women have been mobilised at grassroots levels. It is important to mention that for the first time in Sudanese women's history, one can see that the SWGU has a well organised political system at all levels; this has been documented in the SWGU Publication 2004c stated that After the coming of the Salvation Revolution, the women were able to play their roles through the SWGU as an organised body for all women's ambition and projects (SWGU:2004c:7) starting from the grassroots, local, state and national levels through the SWGU secretariats who are working in close cooperation to assist in the implementation of women's development activities at the national and local level via the above mentioned SWGU structure.

Reference is made to the objectives of the National Comprehensive Poverty Strategy and the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Family Production Programme for supporting poor female headed households, mobilising women's skills as a human resource and promotion of

women's opportunity to find decent jobs. In fact, formulation of the strategy has been worked on through the efforts of the SWGU in coordination with more than 55 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working at the grassroots level to solve poverty among poor families and provide services and resources of production to poor women to achieve greater family welfare.

For the purpose of the research the following part of the chapter will focus on the SWGU General Secretariat, in particular the Economic Development Secretariat, and its efforts in coordinating the Comprehensive National Poverty Reduction Strategy with other related institutions and NGOs for the execution of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme.

. Role of Sudanese Women's General Union in poverty reduction strategy

As mentioned above, the SWGU plays an important role in the strategic planning for the formulation of the SWGU Charter that has been adopted as a base for women's policy formulation and implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS). In fact, the women's poverty reduction strategy has been achieved due to the efforts of the SWGU starting from the establishment of the SWGU with its structure, charts and conferences at all levels including the 1990 conference, coordination and the implementation of the PRS and mobilisation of women at all levels. All these will be discussed in detail through the following parts of this chapter with its SWGU documented evidences.

According to the WSGU (2000ba:3) the Sudanese Women's General Union (SWGU) conducted the first initiative planning conference in December- January, 1990 for two weeks. This conference was a big gathering for women from different sectors of development, ministries, universities, institutions and NGOs at national and state levels to discuss the role of women in the salvation revolution. Mobilisation of women in general and a discussion of issues related to women's participation in the public life were also part of the conference. Finally, agreement on proposals for the SWGU structure, mandates and general rules and regulations was also sought. The objectives of the conference included a discussion about Sudanese women's economic, social and political situation and the formulation of a realistic guideline for a poverty reduction strategy to improve women's status. An additional objective was the reactivation of women at the grassroots level in development efforts.

According to the SWGU document (2000a:5) the conference came up with many recommendations but the important three recommendations will be discussed in the next paragraphs as follows:

One was the establishment of the SWGU preparatory corporation, which consisted of the consultative council responsible for the implementation of the 1990 conference recommendations, approval of the SWGU budget, and follow-up on all NGOs, women's corporations, women's directorates and associations working in the field of women and child care. Second, the executive office would be responsible for the submission of a proposal to the consultative council following up on the implementation of the decisions and recommendations for the role of women in the salvation revolution. The executive office would also follow up with other ministries concerning the implementation of the conference recommendations and the projects that would allow women to push the peace process and increase productive activities. Third was the establishment SWGU preparatory corporation administrative office.

Below is a look at the proposed economic strategy and policies for women in Sudan and an appraisal of the extent to which they have been integrated as a base for the Comprehensive National Strategy for Poverty Reduction. The short term goal of the proposed economic policy is the establishment of women's development units in large investment corporations and integrated national programmes.

According to the SWGU document (2000a:10) the long term goal of the proposed economic policies includes establishment of a national planning council for women's development as a planning unit for women's strategy, and policy formulation backed by financial resource provision for the implementation of the development programme. Other long term goals for policy include the creation of structures at local levels under a united leadership at the national level to assist poor women in raising their voices to be heard by decision makers, using advanced and appropriate technologies related to the environment and local resources, establishment of women's research units at university and high educational institutes. Another goal for policy was the right of the female labour force to reduce discrimination in promotion for higher work classes, especially in public sectors and provision of occupational health and social services, as well as capacity building and training. Concerning the grassroots level, the goals of the proposed economic policies emphasised assisting poor women in the ownership

of sustainable resources of production (credit and land ownership), establishing women's marketing centres, and encouraging the women's sector to participate in economic investment and the establishment of a women's bank. Comparing what had been recommended in this proposed economic strategy, it is, more or less, what has been incorporated in the National Poverty Reduction Strategy and translated in the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity & Production Programme and its family production and savings and microcredit projects.

One of the important issues that had been discussed in the conference as it is mentioned in the SWGU Publication (2000a:173) was the possibility of the establishment of a Ministry of Women's Affairs headed by a woman minister and responsible for reviewing all the women's development plans and policies and studies submitted by various women's offices and directorates at other ministries, then combining them into one strategy, policy and plan (SWGU: 2000a:173). However, that recommendation was modified in a better way by assigning such responsibility to the Ministry of Social Welfare and Woman and Child Development instead of having a separate ministry for women. This proposal was reflected in the establishment of a Social Development Authority at the Ministry of Social Welfare which formulated the women's poverty reduction strategy based on the SWGU.

In this regard, one can conclude that the SWGU plays a coordinating role in making the women's component visible in the National Poverty Reduction Strategy by coordinating with various ministries, organisations and institutions in the country. Thus, for the coordination of women's poverty strategy formulation, implementation and follow-up, conferences were conducted in 1992, 1995, 1997, 1998, 2002 and 2005. These conferences were well organised and successful results were achieved for ensuring that women's policies were implemented and women's political, economic and social status were improved.

However, the women's strategy was formulated in a very short time (15 days) based on a request from the president to call for a women's gathering and preparation of women's strategy by various Sudanese female scholars, development experts and researchers based on information results of the 1993 and 1996 MMS surveys. These surveys are not sufficient to provide enough information on women, especially about the informal economic sectors and grassroots level problems. Thus, rural women at the grassroots level were not properly involved in the discussion or formulation of the policy.

The SWGU, based on the National Poverty Reduction Strategy, gave priority to the establishment of social development centres. In Khartoum, in 1997, a big building for women's training was opened with huge facilities to assist women in acquiring skills in various fields of knowledge. The training centre coordinated its activities with various training institutions inside the country and abroad to conduct courses in politics, management and leadership, information and public relations, small scale industry, economics, eradication of harmful traditional practices, computers and typing. Trainees came from various states in Sudan and in many cases the training courses were conducted at grassroots levels for local women.

Another achievement was the construction of the marketing centre, Al Bait Al Sudani (Al Bait Al Sudani literally means the Sudanese House), in Khartoum in 1997 as a socio-economic institution for tackling marketing problems, especially for handicrafts produced by women in various parts of the country. Other objectives of the marketing centre included the promotion and development of the women's handicrafts products, opening new channels for marketing handicraft products in Sudan and outside Sudan based on advanced technologies as well as encouraging female entrepreneurs' creativity to compete nationally and internationally by improving the quality of their products. In this concern a committee was established for awarding annual prizes to creative female entrepreneurs.

Another important role played by the SWGU was the creation of a strong structure at state and local levels to deliver and administer both the family productive projects/ revolving loan projects and savings and microcredit projects at state and grassroots levels, as well as building the capacity of SWGU staff and the female entrepreneurs themselves. Annex-1: Chart 6.3 page 452 was developed by the author to explain the hierarchical structure of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects. SWGU savings and microcredit fund (Mahfazat Al Marra'a) allow the SWGU to provide microcredits services only and helps female entrepreneurs get access to microcredit services to build their own assets. RLF used by the SWGU as a saving-based for the mobilisation of savings from the poor women to raise sufficient funds for lending.

The following Table 6.1 and Diagram 6.1 explain the micro enterprises projects chosen by the female entrepreneurs and indicate that for the 9 states represented, there are increasing numbers of female entrepreneurs who participated in the savings and microcredit projects during the year 2000-2005. Social Development Centre participants in Al Gezira, 25, Kassala,

75, White Nile 42, Khartoum Marketing Centre, 60, were not included since their economic activities were related to the economic activities initiated by the Social Development Centres. Female entrepreneurs were asked to participate in these activities; they are not expressing the real needs of the entrepreneurs. However due to the efforts of the SWGU staff in coordinating the projects activities with other institutions and NGOs at local levels, from Table 6.1 female entrepreneurs were reached (SWGU Matrix Plan 1999-2005, Chapter six : attached to the Annex-1 Chart 6.1 pages 444-450). The highest participation of female entrepreneurs was recorded for North Darfur at 44.9% of the total female entrepreneurs in the nine states.

Table 6.1 and Diagram 6.1 below show the female entrepreneurs' needs classified by sectors to explain the economic activities that assist poor households in overcoming poverty from the female entrepreneurs' viewpoints.

Table 6.1

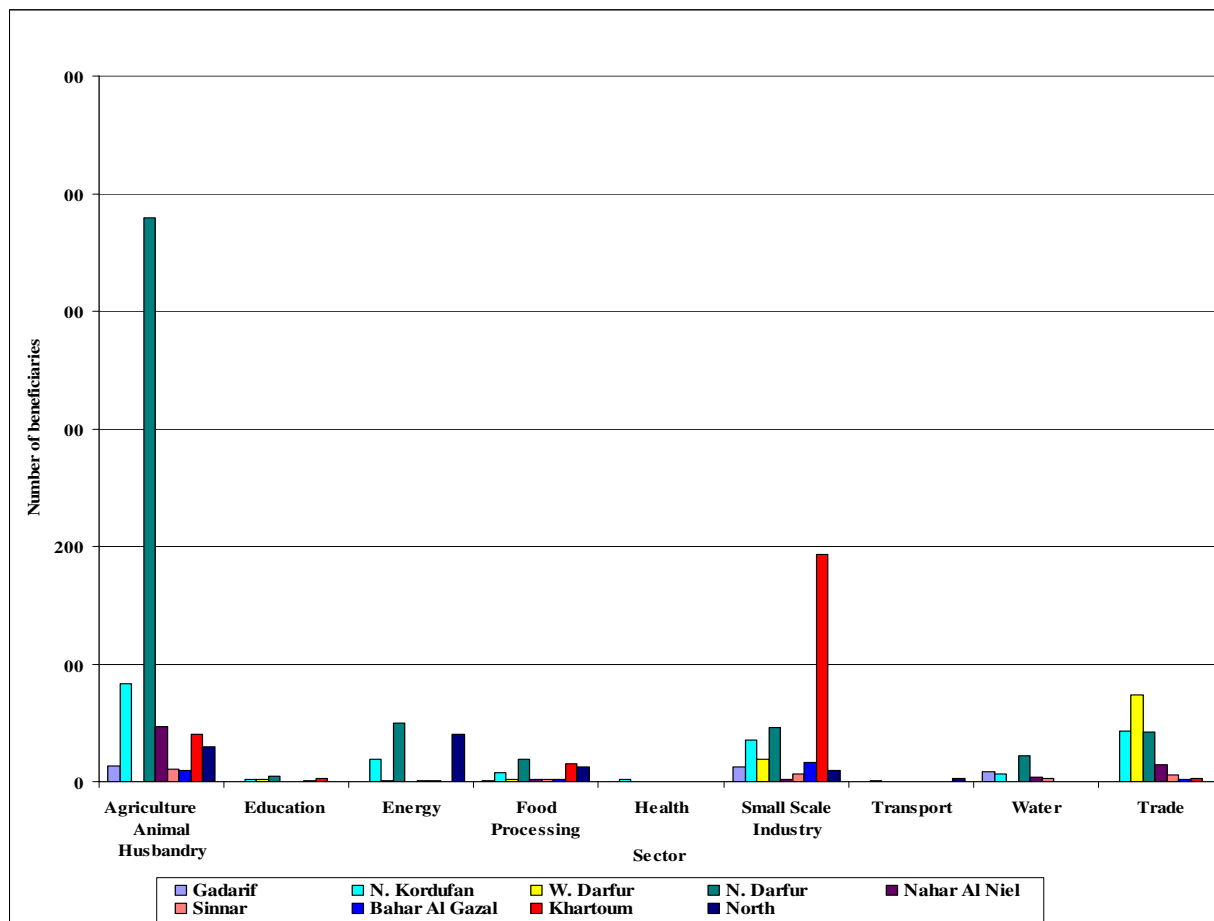
SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects by Sector 2000 - 2005

Sector	Gad-arif	North Kord-Ufan	W. Dar-fur	N. Dar-fur	Nahar Al Niel	Sin-nar	Bahar Al Gazal	Khar-toum	North	Total	%
Agriculture & Animal Husbandry	13	83		479	47	11	10	40	30	713	48.31
Education		2	2	5			1	3		13	0.9
Energy		19	1	50		1	1		40	112	7.6
Food Processing	1	8	2	19	2	2	2	15	12	63	4.26
Health		2								2	0.13
Industry	12	35	19	46	2	7	16	193	10	340	23.03
Transport		1							3	4	0.27
Water	9	7		22	4	3				45	3.04
Trade		43	74	42	14	6	2	3		184	12.46
Total	35	200	98	663	69	30	32	254	95	1476	100
Percentage	2	13.5	6.6	44.9	4.6	3	2	17	6.4	100	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWGU1999:2, SWGU 2000b:4, SWGU 2001:2, SWGU 2003:3, SWGU 2004:2 & SWGU 2005:3)

Diagram 6.1

SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects by Sector 2000-2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWG1999:2, SWGU 2000b:4, SWGU 2001:2, SWGU 2003:3, SWGU 2004:2 & SWGU 2005:3)

A high percentage, 48.3%, of female entrepreneurs chose agriculture and animal husbandry economic activities. This analysis of the female entrepreneur's savings and microcredit projects reflect that there are emerging new kinds of projects and sectors which were not planned by the SWGU but are related to social development needs discussed in Chapter six like energy, water, transport and health. Although these projects are considered income earning projects, they also solve social problems. This needs to be considered by the financial institutions to diversify the kinds of loans and credits granted to poor female entrepreneurs.

The SWGU also played an important role in creating links and cooperation with various financial institutions for female entrepreneurs. The SWGU helped female entrepreneurs to get microcredit to establish their own microcredit projects. The National Poverty Reduction Strategy was the first strategy in Sudan that considered women and allocated funds and

support for poor marginalised women and their families at the grassroots level as mentioned in chapter five: Regularity Poverty Strategy. Displaced persons, martyrs, female headed households, and poor civil workers who had been working in government sectors and faced redundancy were also included as mentioned by SWGU Report 2000a. The SWGU Plan 1999-2005, the financial institutions that targeted these groups and their poverty reduction and savings and microcredit projects will be analysed in detail in the following chapter.

As illustrated in Chapter Five, both Zakat Social Development Fund and SudaTel Corporation, as national funding agencies, allocated specific financial resources for women as part of the Social Mobilisation for Solidarity and Production Programme including the revolving loan fund projects disbursed according to the Islamic financial modes of Zakat Social Development Fund (loan without interest) and microcredit projects of SudaTel (Loan with interest). Each of these female revolving loan funds and female microcredit projects follows the financial policies, rules and regulations of the funding agency. For instance, the SudaTel fund for female savings and microcredit projects is implemented by many NGOs and the funding is channelled through the Social and Credit Development Bank. Funding is restricted to the bank's financial regulations regarding provision of loans with interest, which is not adopted by Zakat Social Development Fund. These bank policies and types of loans will be illustrated in detail in section 6.6 of this chapter.

As it is indicated in the SWGU Annual Reports (SWGU 2000:4) and (SWGU 2001:3) SudaTel fund was distributed among some implementing NGOs as a revolving loan fund for savings and microcredit projects and targeted families of the martyrs, female headed households and workers who faced redundancy after privatisation. SudaTel credit is managed via the Credit and Social Development Bank and implemented with the cooperation of voluntary local organisations. A revolving loan fund was best suited to cover this huge target group. SudaTel credit was to be distributed to ten local organisations working in all states as indicated in the following Table 6.2

Table 6.2 and Diagram 6.2 below explain the distribution of SudaTel funds to various NGOs by state. Comparing Table 6.2 with Table 6.3 below, it is clear that there is an unequal distribution of NGOs per state. This situation leads to an unequal distribution of SudaTel funds among the families in the target group. In our study areas, the analysis of the information recorded in these tables indicates that Khartoum state was allocated 23,680,431 Sudanese Dinar (SD) to be implemented by 9 NGOs. Due to the large number of NGOs

working at Khartoum to implement SudaTel microcredit projects, Khartoum was budgeted to receive the lion's share of SudaTel funds to reduce poverty among 836 female headed households. Northern Kordufan was allocated total funds of 8,654,689 SD to be implemented by three NGOs to eradicate poverty among 83 female headed households. These fund figures indicate an unequal fund distribution between the states and can also be extended to reveal the unequal loan size distributed to be each female headed household. In Khartoum, because the target number is larger, the size of the loan will be 28,325.87 SD while in Northern Kordufan the loan size will reach 104,273.36 SD. However, during the implementation phase, loan sizes and the number of female entrepreneurs targeted to receive funds number will be far removed from what has been planned for Northern Kordufan and Khartoum.

Table 6.2

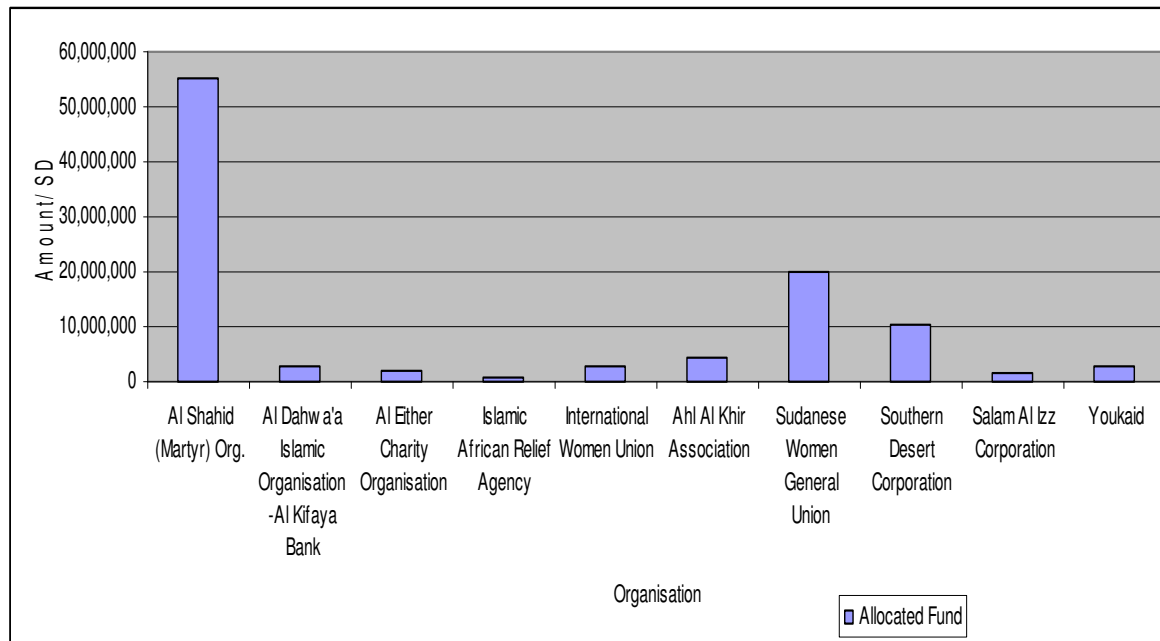
Plan for the Distribution of the SudaTel Credit—First Batch 1999

S. No.	Name of the Organisation	Allocated Fund	Number of Families	Number of Families/ State	States
1	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org.	55,280,918	453	45	Khartoum, Gezira, Nahar Al Niel, White Nile, Northern state, Gadarif, Kassala, N. Kordufan, Red Sea, S. Kordufan
2	Al Dahwa'a Islamic Organisation - Al Kifaya Bank	2,856,650	171	21	Khartoum, Nahar Al Niel, White Nile, Northern state, S. Kordufan, W. Darfur, Bahar Al Jabal, Al Wahda state.
3	Al Either Charity Organisation	2,118,568	14	14	Khartoum
4	Islamic African Relief Agency	939,688	17	17	Khartoum
5	International Women Union	2,877,973	17	17	Khartoum
6	Ahl Al Khir Association	4,527,586	15	3	Khartoum, Nahar Al Niel, Gezira, Red Sea, N. Kordufan,
7	Sudanese Women General Union	19,989,719	308	34	Gezira, Nahar Al Niel, White Nile, Gadarif, N. Kordufan, W. Darfur, Blue Nile, Great Upper Nile, Great Bahar Al Gazal
8	Southern Desert Corporation	10,396,362	685	685	Khartoum
9	Salam Al Izz Corporation	1,426,787	818	204	Bahr Al Gazal, Upper Nile, Al Wahda, W. Kordufan
10	Youkaid	2,785,746	171	34	Khartoum, Nahar Al Niel, Kassala, S. Kordufan, Northern state
	Total	103,199,997	2669		

Source Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2000:4) and (SWGU Annual Report 2001:3)

Diagram 6.2

Plan for the Distribution of the SudaTel Credit–First Batch 1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWGU 2000:4) and (SWGU Annual Report 2001:3)

The SWGU needed to coordinate with some of these NGOs for the implementation of the savings and microcredit projects, especially those confronting implementation problems. Also the coordination between the SWGU and other NGOs in the implementation of savings and microcredit projects are reflected in the SWGU Matrix Plan of Work 1999-2005: Annex-1 Chart 6.1 page 444-450.

Table 6.3

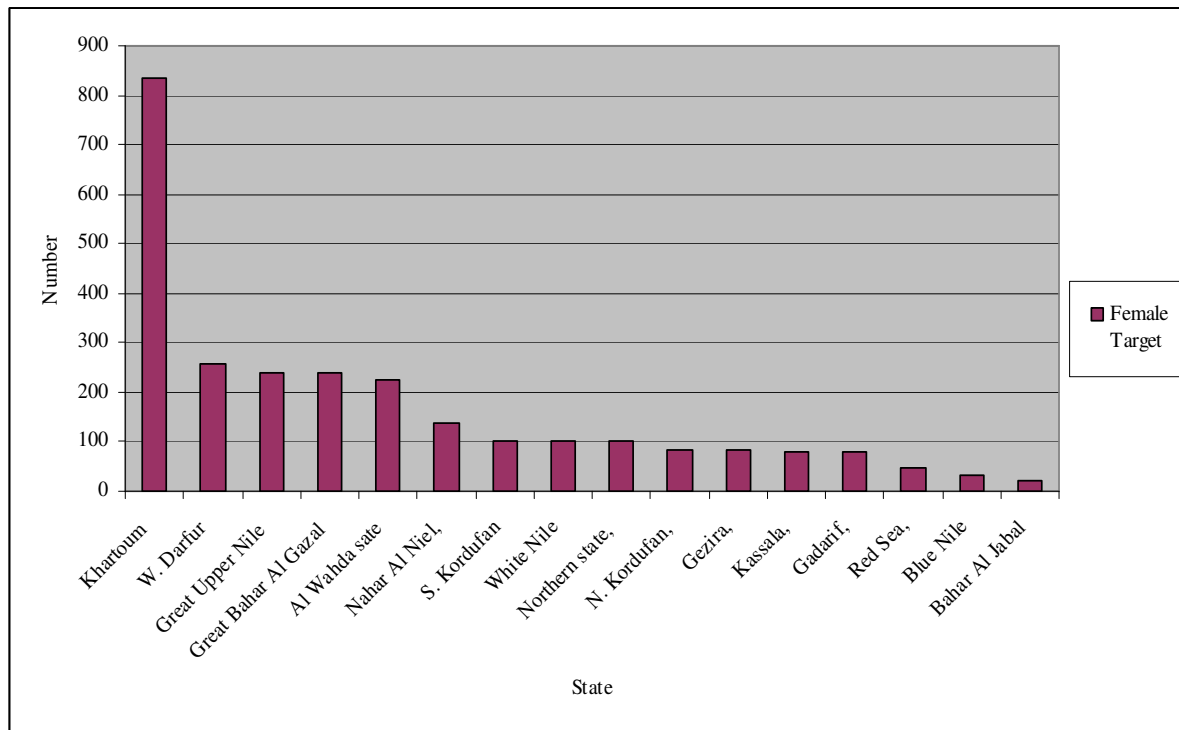
NGO's Distribution Plan by State for Implementing SudaTel Credit

S. No.	Name of the State	Number of Organisations	Female Target	Organisations
1	Khartoum	8	836	Youkaid, Al Shahid (Martyr) Org., Al Dahwa'a Islamic Org., Al Ether Charity Org. International Women Union, Islamic Africa Relief Agency, A Hal Al Khir Association, Southern Desert
2	W. Darfur	3	259	Dahwa'a Islamic Org., SWGU, Salam Al Izz Corporation
3	Great Upper Nile	2	239	SWGU, Salam Al Izz Corporation
4	Great Bahar Al Gazal	2	238	SWGU, Salam Al Izz Corporation
5	Al Wahda sate	2	226	Dahwa'a Islamic Org, Salam Al Iizz Corporation
6	Nahar Al Niel	5	137	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org., Dahwa'a Islamic Org., Ahl Al Khir Association, SWGU, Youkaid
7	S. Kordufan	3	100	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org., Dahwa'a Islamic Org., Youkaid
8	White Nile	3	100	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org., Dahwa'a Islamic Org., SWGU
9	Northern state	3	100	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org., Dahwa'a Islamic Org., Youkaid
10	N. Kordufan	3	82	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org., SWGU, Ahl Al Khir Association
11	Gezira	3	82	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org., SWGU Ahl Al Khir Association
12	Kassala	2	79	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org., Youkaid
13	Gadarif	2	79	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org., SWGU
14	Red Sea	2	48	Al Shahid (Martyr) Org, Ahl Al Khir Association
15	Blue Nile	1	34	SWGU
16	Bahar Al Jabal	1	21	Dahwa'a Islamic Org
	Total	45	2660	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWG2001:2)

Diagram 6.3

Distribution of Female Entrepreneurs Who Benefited From
SudaTel Credit, 1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (SWG2001:2)

The Sudan Bank–Governor’s Office Report, 2003 about the status of the implementation of the policy budget of 1999-2002 for the comprehensive poverty reduction strategy and the Annual Report 2001, as indicated in Table 6.4 and Diagram 6.2, illustrate that Credit & Social Development Bank received approved funds from SudaTel Corporation for the implementation of the family productive projects in different states in Sudan.

Based on this data the results of the study indicate the following observations on the implementation and utilisation of the SudaTel approved fund for female microcredit enterprises by these implementing non-government organisations. First, the table indicated that the total approved fund for female home-based and market productive projects was estimated to cost 103,199,994 SD (the price of the dollar was 258 SD at the time of the credit distribution). This approved amount was targeted to reach 1,004 poor female entrepreneurs, implemented by ten different local organisations with some variation in the amount of each allocation. These organisations can be listed in sequence according to the total approved fund

as follows : Al Shahid (Martyr) Organisation, 55,280,918 SD, which got the lion's share of the approved funds from the Social Development Bank; SWGU, 19,989,719 SD; Southern Desert Corporation, 10,396,362 SD; Ahl Al Khir Association, 4,527,585 SD; International Women's Union, 2,877,972 SD; Al Dahwa'a Islamic Organisation-Al Kifaya Bank, 2,856,650 SD; Youkaid Organisation, 2,785,746 SD; Al Ether Charity Organisation, 2,118,568 SD; Salam Al Izz Corporation, 1,426,787 SD; and Islamic Agency, 939,687 SD.

Second, from the table it is clear that the total amount spent in the implementation phase was equal to 85,397,735 SD. This means that 82.7% of the total budget was implemented up to the end of 2000. Third, six implementing organisations are concentrating their work at Khartoum State only with resources allocations reaching up to 23,716,824 SD, which is equal to 23% of the total approved fund. These calculations emphasize the high concentration of the Credit and Social Development Bank services at Khartoum state than in other states. In addition, two organisations, Al Shahid (Martyr) Organisation and the SWGU, have spent some of their approved funds in Khartoum state as well as other states of Sudan. From these figures and the budget distribution it is clear that there is unequal distribution of the budget between the Sudan states. Fourth, the SWGU's approved financial allocation was equal to 19.36 % of the total SudaTel approved allocation of the fund for all organisations and 1.6 % (13,260,000 SD) of the total amount of the SudaTel fund via the Social Development Bank. However, the SWGU managed to implement only 66% of the approved fund. Fifth, according to the table, both the SWGU and Al Izz Corporation did not utilise the whole approved budget allocated to them during the first phase of the implementation because the family productive projects proposals were coming from states in which there were no Social Development Bank branches. This raises the question of how the SWGU could have reached these target groups. This also raises the issue of planning for microcredit projects and how to facilitate the accessibility of funds for female microcredit entrepreneurs without considering the existence of bank facilities and infrastructure. Sixth, Southern Development Corporation did not present additional projects to utilise the remaining approved fund. In this situation Southern Development Corporation is either not serious about the female microcredit projects or lacks interest in their work with female microcredit enterprises. Seventh, Youkaid organisation never presented any female microcredit enterprises for funding during this stage of implementation. This leads to another issue; the identification of the appropriate organisation to execute the implementation of the female microcredit projects in time and as planned. Finally, it is important to mention that SudaTel credits are subject to the bank's financial rules

about interest, not like Zakat Fund. The reaction of female entrepreneurs towards these two different microcredit financial modes will be explained in Chapter seven. For more details see the tables and the diagrams below.

Table 6.4

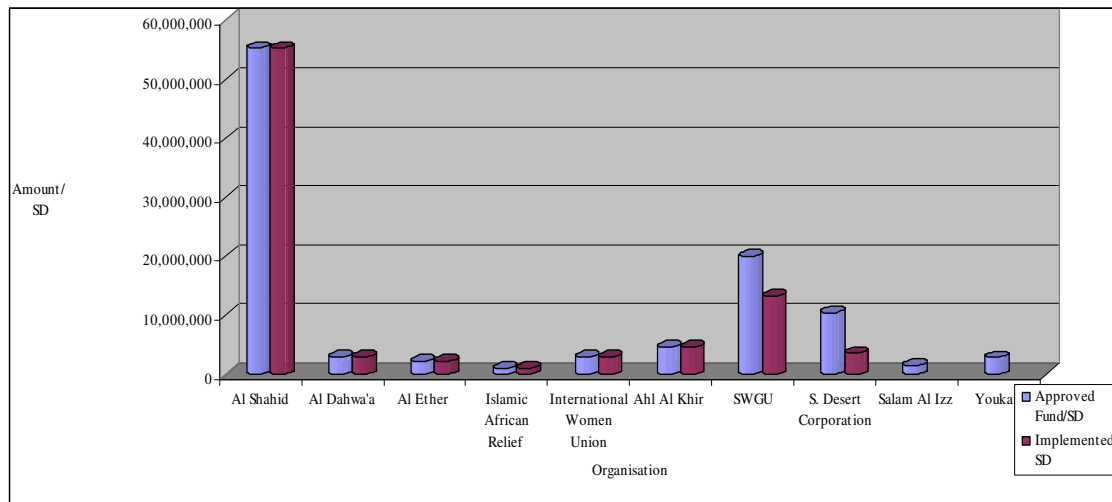
SudaTel Fund Savings and Microcredit Projects Implemented by the Social Development Bank Up to 31/12/2001

Name of Organisation	Approved Fund/Dinar	Implemented /Dinar	Beneficiaries	Average Fund/ Individual	Kind of Projects	Location	% of Implementation
Al Shahid (Martyr) Org.	55,280,918	55,280,918	453	122,032	Various Productive Family Projects	Northern States	100
Al Dahwa'a Islamic Organisation -Al Kifaya Bank	2,856,650	2,856,650	200	14,283	Small Hand Crafts Work	Khartoum	100
Al Ether Charity Organisation	2,118,568	2,118,568	14	151,326	Poultry	Khartoum	100
Islamic African Relief Agency	939,687	939,687	19	49,457	Sheep /goat raising- Small industries	Khartoum	100
International Women Union	2,877,972	2,877,972	37	77,783	Simple trade- Small industry& Handicrafts	Khartoum	100
Ahl Al Khir Association	4,527,585	4,527,585	17	266,328	Simple trade- Services projects	Khartoum	100
Sudanese Women General Union	19,989,719	13,260,000	231	57,402	Sheep /goat raising- Small trade, Agriculture, services projects	Nahar Al Nile, Khartoum, Northern Kordufan, Gadarif, Gezira & White Nile	66
Southern Desert Corporation	10,396,362	3,536,355	33	107,162	Small industry - Simple trade	Khartoum	34
Salam Al Izz Corporation	1,426,787	NA					
Youkaid	2,785,746	NA					
Total	103,199,994	85,397,735	1004				

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (BOS 2002:8)

Diagram 6:4

SudaTel Fund for Family Productive Projects up to 2001



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (BO S 2002:8)

Table 6.5

SudaTel Fund Savings and Microcredit Projects Credit Implemented

by the Social Development Bank

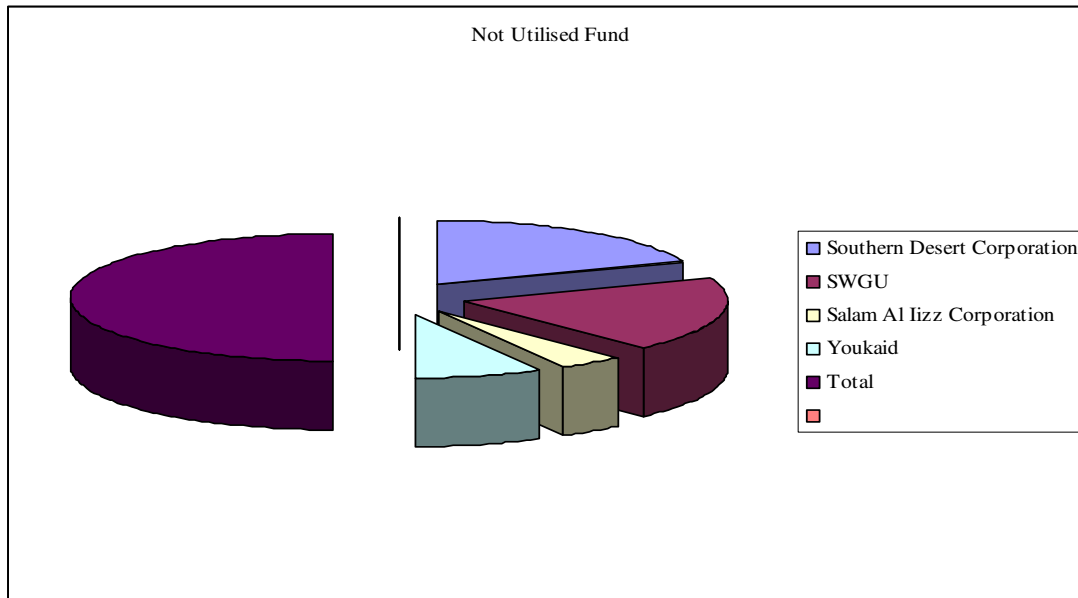
(1999-2002) up to 31/12/2001

Organisation	Not Utilised Fund	Remarks
Southern Desert Corporation	6,860,007	No other projects presented
SWGU	6,729,719	Projects presented located in state where there are no bank branches
Salam Al Izz Corporation	1,426,787	Projects presented located in state where there are no bank branches
Youkaid	2,785,746	Did not present any projects
Total	17,802,259	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (BO S 2002:8)

Diagram 6.5

Unutilised SudaTel Microcredit Fund- Credit and Social Development Bank



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (BO S 2002:8)

SudaTel Fund was not utilised in time by four local organisations, SWGU, 6,729,719 SD; Southern Desert Corporation, 6,860,007 SD; Salam Al Izz Corporation, 1,426,787 dinar; and Youkaid International, 2,785,746 SD; equal to a total amount of 17,802,259 SD.

Other events impeding the implementation of the projects included delays in starting up the Social Mobilisation for Social Solidarity and Production Programme and winning the approval of the SWGU charter and its principles.

. **Financial institution policies**

. . **Formal institutions**

Poor female entrepreneurs are burdened by paying additional money to the financial supporters and money lenders along with the principal as a condition for obtaining a loan. Instead, the bank adopting the Islamic banking system utilises capital and skill, sharing the risk and the resultant profit or loss with microcreditors. In this case it is only the profit sharing ratio, not the rate of return that is predetermined.

. . . Modes of finance

The Islamic system adapted to meet the needs of small scale enterprises in Sudan is composed of three major financial modes or instruments. Murabaha mode of finance is considered as a buy, purchase or resale contract of debt or deferred payment sales. In other words the bank purchases the goods ordered by the client and resells them to the female entrepreneurs at a higher price, usually on a deferred payment basis. This is the preferred instrument from the banks' point of view, and it is also the instrument that is closest to conventional interest-bearing financial contracts. Banks are allowed to have a maximum of 30 percent Murabaha contracts in their portfolios with a 12 percent mark-up.

The Mudharaba mode of finance is known as an agency joint venture or limited partnership contract, wherein the bank and the female entrepreneurs share a project, but the bank provides the capital and the female entrepreneur provides labour. The profit is shared according to an agreed-upon ratio, but if there is a loss, the bank loses its financial input. This mode of finance is adapted to larger enterprises.

Musharaka is another financial mode known as a joint partnership contract in which the bank can enter into partnership with the female entrepreneurs on the basis of diminishing Musharaka, through which the full ownership of the business assets passes to the female entrepreneur partner after a certain period. Under Musharaka agreement, the female entrepreneur is given the full right to gradually buy as much as she can from the bank's shares until she becomes the sole owner of the asset. Thus one can add that the bank and the entrepreneur share a project and its profit. Ownership is distributed according to each party's share in the financing. Profits are shared according to an agreed-upon ratio, but losses are shared according to ownership. This can be clearly understood as in the case of Islamic investment arrangements that put great emphasis on the transaction and no restriction (not sure about this sentence) on security against possible losses is demanded. Thus, if the microcredit project ends in a loss the female partner does not bear this loss alone. The bank will share the loss with the female entrepreneur. If she is unable to settle her instalments, a grace period will be given to the female entrepreneur without any additional fees.

Partnership financing has many advantages to offer to small home-based female entrepreneurs. Musharaka is a flexible, fair, easily understandable form of financing. It caters

to both production and management, thus leading to increased incomes for female entrepreneurs who do not own capital. It is a suitable mode of financing for both working and fixed capital. Musharaka does not require strict collateral guarantees and does not leave the female partner with a heavy burden of debts, post-dated cheques or any other kind of obligations. Personal acquaintance with the female entrepreneur, and her behaviour, in addition to continual supervision and follow-up by the bank's management, are necessary requirements in the absence of conventional guarantees. Salam is considered also as a buy and resells contract, but exactly the opposite of Murabaha, in the sense that the bank purchases the goods from its entrepreneur, but the entrepreneur delivers the goods at a later point in time. This contract is used mostly for agriculture. The bank pays the farmer on the day the contract is signed and the farmer delivers the crop to the bank after harvest.

. . .2 Banking and government financing policies regulations

World Bank (2003:94) mentioned that the bank policies for establishing the small scale enterprises sub-sector started at the beginning of the last decade. The Financing Policy (Islamic Credit Policy of the Central Bank of Sudan) of 1990, for the first time, included crafts as one of the priority sectors for financing. The full recognition of the small enterprise sub-sector started with the 1994/95 Financing Policy. Craftsmen, professionals and small producers, including productive families, are considered one of the priority sectors for banking finance (BOS, 1994/95). According to the World Bank records World Bank (2003:94) the bank of Sudan offers credit to non-governmental sectors in various fields using various financial modes. The most common mode of funding is Murabaha which shows a high rate of increase. In 1996 this mode of financing accounted for 52.9% of all financing executed. By 1999, Murabaha reached its maximum at 60.5% as indicated in the Table6.6 and

Table 6.6

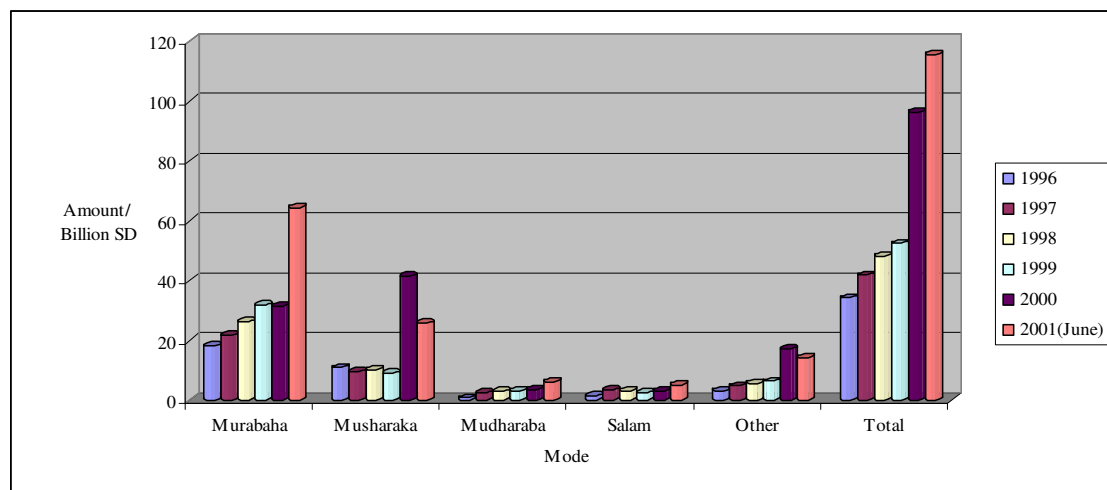
Credit to Non-governmental Sector by Mode of Financing
(Billion Sudanese Dinar)

Mode of finance	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001(June)
Murabaha	18.1	21.7	26.2	31.7	31.4	64.5
Musharaka	10.9	9.5	10.2	8.9	41.3	25.6
Mudharaba	0.7	2.3	2.9	3.1	3.6	6.1
Salaam	1.4	3.5	3.2	2.4	3.1	5.1
Other	3.1	4.8	5.7	6.3	17	14.3
Total	34.2	41.8	48.1	52.4	96.4	115.6
Percentage	%	%	%	%	%	%
Murabaha	52.9	51.9	54.5	60.5	32.6	55.8
Musharaka	31.9	22.7	21.2	17	42.8	22.1
Mudharaba	2	5.5	6	5.9	3.7	5.3
Salaam	4.1	8.4	6.7	4.6	3.2	4.4
Other	9.1	11.5	11.9	12	17.6	12.4
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (WB 2003:94)

Diagram 6.6

Credit to Non-governmental Sector by Mode of Financing
(Billion Sudanese Dinar)



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (WB 2003:94)

The financial regulations stipulated in the financing policies 1994/95 of the banks for this enterprise sub-sector consisted of the following:

a) The financing of this enterprise sub-sector may be based on the restricted Mudharaba or other financing systems as indicated above.

b) The first instalment of Murabaha for small enterprises is not to be less than 15 per cent of the value of the asset. The first instalment of Murabaha can be delayed and paid as part of the total instalments. After the 1995 Financing Policy, the first instalment is cancelled and the payments are arranged between the bank and the entrepreneurs.

c) The percentage of participation in Musharaka of finance granted to craftsmen or professionals must not to be less than 15 per cent of the bank's total funding. In the case of small producers the percentage of participation is left for mutual agreement between the bank and the partner.

d) The minimum Murabaha margin in 1994/95 and 1995 was 15 per cent per annum, raised to 30 per cent for professionals, craftsmen and small producers, and 20 per cent for productive families. In 1997, the two margins were 35 and 30 per cent respectively.

e) Exemptions are granted for craftsmen, professionals, small producers, including productive families, from registration certificates, audited statements and profit and loss accounts in the case of financing of less than Sudanese Pound (LS) 5 million.

In accordance with the Financing Policy of the Bank of Sudan, and the national financing policies, there are certain conditions that need to be fulfilled by the Sudanese Banks. These conditions include determining the banks internal financing policies for financing small producers to ensure successful projects. Then they must apply the central bank regulations and make sure the marketing of the output and so on is successful. The banks must make socio-economic surveys of applicants, checks for debts and a review of the marketing experience of the loan applicant. In addition to other fees, the national policies require banks to comply with the finance tax, stamp duty and Zakat clearance certificate and other government fees and duties.

. .2 Informal /Social institutions policy

In Sudan, apart from institutional financial support by formal financial banks, a very large number of social schemes to provide microcredit for poor female entrepreneurs have historically been in operation. SWGU Report 2002 mentioned that Khata fund or Sandoq fund is a wide spread social effort of informal saving and credit adopted by the Sudanese women (SWGU2002:3). Khata fund is considered as a savers' self-administered revolving fund in which each woman contributes an equal agreed amount of money from all members and each time one member gets the whole sum of money (Sarfa) at regular intervals. The women, headed by the chairperson, pool the total amount collected from the members and distribute it in an agreed order. Such Sarfa agreements are usually based on the prioritised needs of the women who decided on a suitable time to receive their Sarfa. The Sarfa is used mainly, but not wholly, for small scale micro-enterprise, rent, purchase of equipment/utensils, gold, working capital, etc. Khata gives women access to a lump sum, which could otherwise be difficult to accumulate. It serves many functions for poor women because it encourages small savings, consolidates the solidarity of the saving groups and provides small credit without guarantee at a convenient time and space. Apart from Khata, village traders provide another way in which micro-enterprises are funded. They represent one of the most flexible and traditional financing institutions. They require only personal guarantees, but operate with high profit margins.

Another form of social institution for small enterprise funding is the traditional partnership in the means of production. In this system, a relatively poor small entrepreneur gets access to the means of production like sheep from relatives who own sheep. And milk production and new born sheep are distributed equally between the poor small entrepreneur and the sheep owner. Provision of microcredit in certain parts of the Sudan is made via kinship and tribal affiliation. Members of the same clan/tribe or area provide flexible financial help to start businesses without any additional costs. Collective help action, Nafir, is another social institution for small scale funding where village inhabitants contribute to poor families in the form of collective work. This collective work is organised on many occasions which require collaborative assistance whether in labour, equipment, tools or knowledge.

. . National non government organisations

Al Awad & Khalafallah (2001:5) mentioned that some of the local social funds and local NGOs participated in the implementation of the national poverty reduction strategy include: the National Fund for Pensions, the National Fund for Social Insurance, Takaful Fund, Social Solidarity Fund, Sharia Implementation Support Fund, National Pension Fund and others are established to serve specific religious, social and economic goals. Some are financed from the general budget, while others are financed through charity, or by beneficiaries. Among other activities, they are also engaged in providing small credit for increasing the standard of living projects types, such as leatherwork, cloth-making, tailoring, macaroon production and poultry production, especially for poor, widowed, divorced and deserted women. In this junction, another financial mode mentioned in Chapter 5 and in this chapter, Gard Hassan, is adopted by Zakat Social Development Fund for poor female entrepreneurs.

Given the volume of poverty, a considerable effort was devoted by the SWGU and the Credit and Social Development Bank to outline financial regulations to enhance funding of female entrepreneurs' microcredit and saving projects, as detailed in Chapter seven.

The following characteristics of Sudanese banking prevent the system from working for the mitigation of poverty:

a) budget allocated to family production and female microcredit projects is not enough. As indicated in the National Comprehensive Strategy for Poverty Reduction the percentage is equal to 10 % of the financial resources of the entire budget.

b) demand deposits ratio is over 70 per cent of the total deposits. Demand deposits of the household are characterised by a high degree of instability. In other words, the range of savings facilities which include higher interest deposits reaches to over 70 percent of the total deposits with more restricted access. Al Awad & Khalafallah (2001:5) discussed the financial sustainability that requires cutting costs to a minimum leading many programmes to cut complementary services. In the past some support services in some programmes, including business training and gender awareness, have been both expensive and had minimal impact. However, this does not mean that complementary services are not needed or would not make

a substantial contribution to both all aspects of empowerment and repayment rates if they were better designed

c) according to the SWGU Report 2001 there is state inequality in the distribution of Credit and Social Development bank branches and the concentration of branches in some states and urban areas. Khartoum and central states share almost 50% of the total number of banks in the country.

e) weak financial resources of the banking system, and a relatively low lending capacity to poor female entrepreneurs. If the enterprise fails, small businessmen will be burdened with debt and lose their livelihood.

f) collateral and other complicated procedures.

g) bank policy makes a marginal contribution to women's empowerment and poverty alleviation. Without explicit support for women's grassroots movements or explicitly addressing gender inequality, bank policy fails to support a poverty reduction strategy. Banks must mainstream the concerns of poor women in their policies.

h) change of the policies of financing institutions like Zakat Social Development fund in allocating and spending more funds for orphan children instead of poor female productive families.

i) criteria used for the selection of the target female headed households groups and poor families by the Zakat committee and SWGU staff members at local levels are questionable.

j) using two modes of finance for one Mobilisation for Social Solidarity and Family Production Programme might create confusion and lead to conflict among the poor families. It might encourage more women and female entrepreneurs not to repay their instalments. They might seek assistance and find solutions by being registered at Zakat Fund in order to be released from loan repayment or from paying the Murabaha marginal profit. More women might start seeking Gard Hassan loans and be reluctant to take a loan even with low interest. More details about the SWGU mandate, banks' rules and responsibilities, the applications of

the bank, and Zakat Social Development fund and the burden of taxes and Zakat clearance certificates will be dealt with in Chapter seven.

Conclusion

To create a society which targeted women's equal rights and duties to participate in the political, economic and social development process, the Sudan Salvation Revolution Government encouraged and supported women to be integrated into the NCP by strategically planning and formulating their poverty reduction policy and programmes. To administer the implementation of the women's poverty reduction policy and programmes at all levels, the national government has called for the establishment of the SWGU in 1989-1990 by mobilising the women through a conference to discuss their socio-economic situations, needs and priorities and come up with a voluntary political organisation for women. This mobilisation process yields its fruit by gathering women from various states of Sudan coming from urban and rural areas and representing Sudanese women to discuss their socio-economic situations, come up with a clear women's policy, strategy and a voluntary women's organisation to empower women politically, economically and socially. As a result of this conference the SWGU was established with a clear role for mobilisation, planning and coordination between various women's organisations including government and non government, departments and institutions.

The SWGU compositions, structure, charters and objectives were designed to assist the policy makers in visualising the women's role in the development, proper integration of women in the development of the national comprehensive poverty reduction strategy and being targeted by the social solidarity and social mobilisation programmes: family productive and microcredit programmes for women's empowerment. To implement the women's component of the national comprehensive poverty reduction strategy the SWGU has to coordinate with financial institutions such as Zakat Social Development Fund, SudaTel and other banks as well as encouraging financial social institutions to assist poor women to get access to credit. Hence these financial institutions have their own mode of finance and procedures for SWGU to cooperate, coordinate and implement the microcredit programmes for women's empowerment.

The next chapter will explain the SWGU Microcredit and savings' projects and the role played by the SWGU to coordinate and implement these projects. In addition the chapter will illustrate the financial institutions and their performance at the national level and their financial contribution to implement the SWGU development plan. Also the chapter will go

into detail to explain the performance of the financial institutions from the female entrepreneurs' perspectives, the problems encountered and the coping strategies adopted by them. The chapter ends with the SWUG administrative roles in terms of creating enabling and sustainable environment by building the SWGU structure to implement the microcredit projects as well as capacity building and other training activities to empower SWGU staff and the female entrepreneurs.

Chapter Seven: Sudanese Women's General Union savings and microcredit projects

. Introduction

This chapter explains the SWGU's approach to poverty reduction. The SWGU adopted the female savings and microcredit projects as a tool for implementing the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy Quarter Century (2003-2027) for the Advancement of Women through the Social Mobilization for Solidarity and Family Production Program illustrated in the previous chapters. Based on this national strategy and the national programme, the SWGU prepared their strategic plan and consequently the SWGU work plan.

Reviewing this approach to poverty reduction commences with analysing the sectors of production selected by the female entrepreneurs. These include various economic activities which indicate the priority of that sector. This analysis will be supported by identifying the factors that motivate the female entrepreneurs to participate in these savings and microcredit projects. The decision process and the choices undertaken by female entrepreneurs are analysed in detail by identifying the initiation of the ideas, previous experiences and the channel of communication that assist women in making decisions and relating these decisions to the women's empowerment situation.

The financial institutions policies and regulation and their contribution to formulate the financial policy for the implementation of the female savings and microcredit projects to alleviate poverty will be discussed in details. Also the administrative roles played by both financial institutions and SWGU staff to implement the SWGU savings and microcredit projects at local levels will be illustrated at the end.

.2 Kinds of savings and microcredit projects

Savings and microcredit and revolving loan fund projects have been adopted by poor women's households as a tool to alleviate poverty. In fact, these projects are two sides of one coin in their context and in their implementation, administration and supervision. There is variation in the financing mode adopted by microfinance institutions who serve targeted groups. For instance, the Credit and Social Development Bank adopts the system of loans

with interest for the SudaTel fund, while it adopts the revolving loan fund for Gard Hassan or loan without interest for Zakat Development Fund. These financial systems and their implications shall be illustrated later on in this chapter.

Table 7.1 illustrates the various kinds of savings and microcredit projects identified by the female entrepreneurs as tools to alleviate poverty in Gadarif, North Kordufan, West Darfur, North Darfur, Nahar Al Niel, Sinnar, Bahar Al Gazal, Khartoum and Northern states. Al Gezira and the White Nile states preferred to use the whole allocated fund for the establishment of social development and production centres as shall be analysed later on in this chapter. Southern Darfur savings and microcredit projects were postponed due to war and conflict and restarted again at the end of 2004.

Table 7.1

Kinds of SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects 2000 - 2005

S.L	Kind of Project	State										
		Gadarif	North Kordufan	W. Darfur	N. Darfur	Nahar Al Niel	Sinnar	Bahar Al Gazal	Khartoum	North	Total	
1	Ragsha (mini-car for three passengers only)										3	3
2	Sheep/goat raising	2	13		5	15	1	1	8		25	70
3	Agriculture Input trade (seeds and fodder)					3						3
4	Vegetable selling (Kiosk)	10	3		450							463
5	Milk production		30		1							31
6	Poultry	1	30		5	5	6		19			66
7	Tea Selling							1	150			151
8	Shop/ Restaurant (drink and food)	1	6	1	2			3	7	10		30
9	Donkey Cart (water selling)	9	7		22	4	3					45
10	Generator (electricity selling)			1				1				2
11	Fridge	3	4				5	5	9			26
12	Bricks		1		1							2
13	Local Perfume	1	18						5			24
14	Spare parts (vehicle)		1									1
15	Ice cream /sweet maker		3	1					7	5		16
16	Sewing Machine	2	5		43		2	2	8			62

17	Dress, sewing material and hand crafts selling	5	1	17		2		5	10		40
18	Wood and Charcoal selling		19		49		1				69
19	Cooker / Oven				1					40	41
20	Spices Grinder		3		3		1				7
21	Cow raising / pull slaughtering		7		18		4	7	8	5	49
22	Laboratory and delivery equipment		2								2
23	Peanut Grinder				11						11
24	Video Set							1			1
25	Oil / Butter trade				7						7
26	Kissra (sorghum pancake) and bakery		1					1		7	9
27	Trade (goods, crops, H.H. equipment, utensils)		43	74	35	14	6	2	3		177
28	Leather Industry			1					4		5
29	Macaroni Machine and Dough Maker	1	1	1	5	2	1		8		19
30	Library, Stationery, computer unit and Tel-communication		2	2	4				3		11
31	Vegetable and fruit growing					24		2	5		31
32	Sorghum Mill							1			1
	Total	35	200	98	662	69	30	32	254	95	1475
	Percentage	2	13.5	6.6	44.9	4.6	3	2	17	6.4	100

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from

SWGU Reports(SWGU1999:2, SWGU 2000b:4, SWGU 2001:2, SWGU 2003:3, SWGU 2004:2, SWGU 2005:3,

SWGU2006:2)

Concerning the study areas at Khartoum and Northern Kordufan, the following part of this chapter focuses on the economic activities executed by the female entrepreneurs who get microcredits to implement their savings and microcredit projects for the purpose of strengthening their family members' well-being and consequently alleviating poverty.

From Table 7:2 and Diagram 7.1 below, it is clear that there are four groups of female entrepreneurs. In Khartoum state there are three groups: Tea sellers, Thowra and Al Khalawi groups that are involved in various individual economic activities as illustrated in Table 7.1 SWGU savings and microcredit projects 2000–2005.

From the Table 7:2 and Diagram 7.1 below, it is clear that there is a high positive correlation between women's participation in SWGU savings and microcredit projects and Services sector activities. Their participation in the Services sector is equal to 70% of the participants in the sample. The same is recorded for the non participants group who plan to join the projects. Although the percentage of non participants in savings and microcredit projects is slightly less than the participants group, it reflects the high positive correlation between their planned participation in the Services sector over any other sector.

When the participants and non participants were asked why they participate in the services sector they reported that this sector is very easy to manage and provides a quick return because it is related to immediate daily needs. These activities do not require sophisticated skills because they are traditional kinds of work done within the household. Some family labour is required to assist in these activities, like food processing, tea and coffee selling, vegetables and spices, salted fish selling, Kissra (sorghum pancake) selling, clothes and bed sheets trading, local perfume and cosmetic selling, ice cream making and selling, and water provision. From Table 7.2 it is clear that these economic activities are carried out by the three participant groups concentrated in Omdurman province; the tea sellers who are the market based entrepreneurs, 100%, and the other two groups Al Thowra, 50%, and Al Khalawi, 75%, who are home based entrepreneurs.

The second economic sector is the animal husbandry sector where the participants who are already involved in the savings and microcredit project and non-participants who would like to join the projects represent 14% of the sample. These activities include animal raising at home, mainly livestock, goat, sheep raising and milk processing to produce cheese, Samin

(ghee) and yogurt and marketing of these animals either near home or at local markets. These activities are mainly carried out by the milk production sellers of Kazagil centre at Al Obied province, 100%, who are market based producers. Then Thowra group, 20%, followed by Khalawi group, 2.5%, whose economic activities are not limited to sheep and goat raising but also poultry for meat and eggs sold locally. Female entrepreneurs mentioned that although this sector requires too much work, as many as 19 hours per day, and many household labourers are required to assist in this work, the daily return from animals, like meat, milk, eggs and wool, during production season is quick. The risk is lower in the marketing of these products which are sold easily and can also be processed and sold at peak seasons. The industrial economic sector has only absorbed 7 % of the milk production group, 14 % of Thowra and 11.25% of Khalawi in the participants group and 9% in the non participants group. These small industries include local perfume, cloth and leather making.

Table 7.2

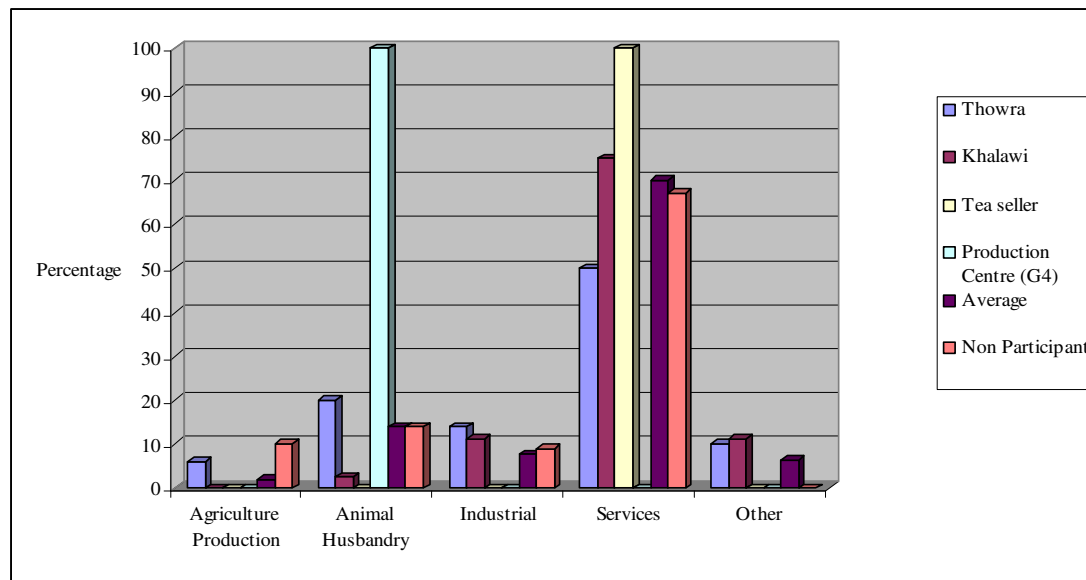
Economic Activities Executed by the Microcredit Entrepreneurs

Economic Activity	Thowra		Khalawi		Tea seller		Production Centre (G4)		Average	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Partici-pants	Non Partici-pants
Agriculture Production	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10
Animal Husbandry	20	20	2	2.5	0	0	20	100	14	14
Industrial	14	14	9	11.25	0	0	0	0	7.7	9
Services	50	50	60	75	100	100	0	0	70	67
Other	10	10	9	11.3	0	0	0	0	6.3	0
Total	100	100	80	100	100	100	20	100	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7:1

Economic Activities Executed by the Microcredit Entrepreneurs



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Table 7:2 and Diagram 7.1 above indicate a negative correlation is found with the participation of female entrepreneurs in agriculture production of vegetable growing. Non participants who would like to join the projects also indicated a negative correlation between their planned participation in microcredit projects and the industrial and agriculture sector. The reasons mentioned by the participants are that growing vegetables need production inputs such as land, water and industrial products which require capital, more than the size of the loan they receive.

In conclusion the needs of the female entrepreneurs reflect a high priority for services. Securing sufficient food for their household members and other households in the community, providing trading services and solving shortages in water services are immediate needs that can be addressed by their projects. Due to the constraints in land, water and physical mobility for seeking technology and marketing, the majority of the female entrepreneurs prefer not to undertake vegetable growing and other agricultural activities.

. Objectives

To assess the impact of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects it is essential to understand the female microcredit entrepreneurs' motivation for participating in the SWGU

savings and microcredit projects and then comparing these objectives with various areas of consumption of earned income from these projects. This will provide indicators of the success of the projects. A comparison will then be made of these objectives with the objectives of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects that have been formulated based on the poverty reduction strategy and assess if the strategy is really reflecting the needs and concerns of women at grass root levels.

The following Table 7.3 and Diagram 7.2 explain the female entrepreneurs' rationale behind their choices to be involved in microcredit projects and participate in these economic activities. The results of this study have indicated that external factors play an important role in determining the participation of female entrepreneurs in the SWGU microcredit activities. As we shall see in Chapter 8: Table 8.3 Marital Status large numbers of female entrepreneurs caused other female entrepreneurs to participate in SWGU microcredit and savings activities. In addition, the death of the husband or the father, divorce, husband's re-marriage or husband's long term absence and separation caused the woman to take the man's responsibility as breadwinner. Other female entrepreneurs participate in these microcredit activities not due to external factors, but due to household members' extreme economic needs when the husbands' incomes are not sufficient to satisfy household expenses. This result is clear from the Table 8:3 Marital Status that the greatest number, 60%, of the female entrepreneurs are married women who joined the savings and microcredit projects because their role changed from supporting figures to primary figures in the provision of household resources.

Table 7.3 and Diagram 7.2 below indicate that 58.7% of the female entrepreneurs from the four groups responded that they joined the projects to support their families either their nuclear family or their extended family mainly parents. It is important to say that supporting the family is the major reason for the female entrepreneurs to join the SWGU savings and microcredit projects. The second reason is represented by 16.3% of the female entrepreneurs who mentioned that they were motivated to get money for their children. Many of these female entrepreneurs were divorced and separated and their former husbands failed to provide obligatory maintenance to feed their children or remarried and abandoned their wives and their children. The third reason is represented by 11.7% of the female entrepreneurs who said that they had been encouraged to support themselves. The fourth reason is represented by 8% of the female entrepreneurs who said that they had been motivated to help their husbands

whose income was not sufficient enough to cover the household expenses. Other factors mentioned by the female entrepreneurs include free time, 3.6%, hobbies, 1%, and inherited traditional work, 0.7%.

Table 7.3

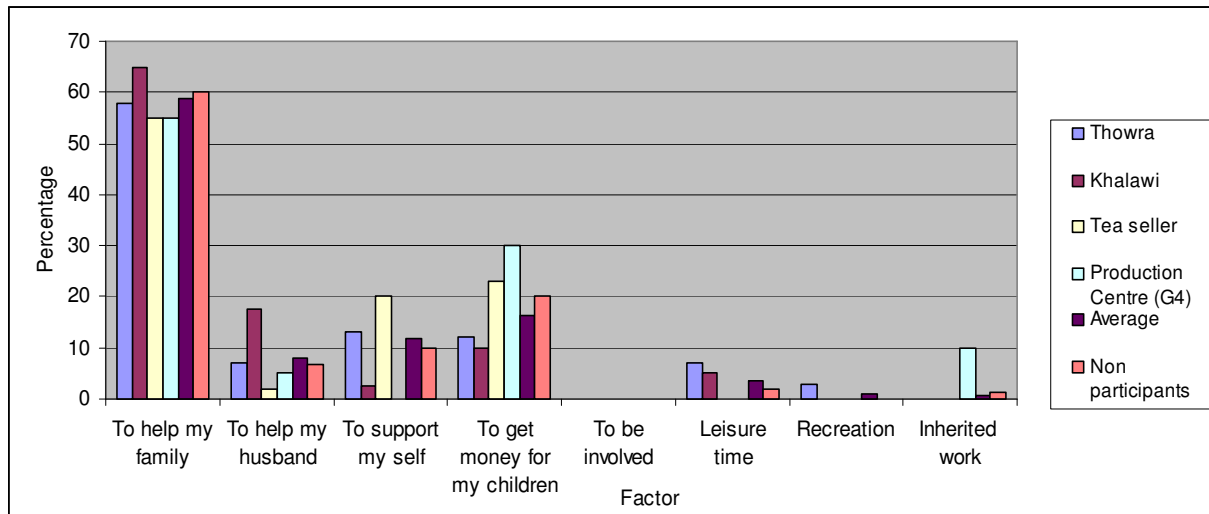
Reasons for Joining Savings and Microcredit Projects

Factors	Thowra(G1)		Tea Seller (G1)		Khalawi(G1)		Production Centre (G4)		Average	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Partic ipants	Non partic ipants
To help my family	58		55	55	52	65	11	55	59	60
To help my husband	7	7	2	2	14	17.5	1	5	8	6.7
To support my self	13	13	20	20	2	2.5	0	0	12	10
To get money for my children	12	12	23	23	8	10	6	30	16	20
To be involved	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Leisure time	7	7	0	0	4	5	0	0	3.6	2
Recreation	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Inherited work	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	10	0.7	1.3
Total	100	100	100	100	80	100	20	100	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.2

Reasons for Joining Savings and Microcredit Projects



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

The findings of the study have shown that there are push and pull factors that assist the female entrepreneurs to make their own decisions and establish their own businesses. The female entrepreneurs reported that they had decided to establish their own businesses because their living conditions were very poor. According to the women joining the savings and microcredit projects, this empowered them to mitigate their poverty by earning more money. The major factors causing their poverty that work as incentives to join the microcredit savings projects can be classified in the following push and pull factors below:

Table 7.4 below indicates that push factors are stronger in motivating female entrepreneurs to join the SWGU savings and microcredit projects than pulling factors because they are related to satisfying current practical needs and a desire to support their husbands and children, a lack of institutional and services support and a lack of resources. Pull factors shared by all the four groups and reflected in long term objectives and some strategic needs are self recognition, making independent decisions, future security and having their own financial resources to increase their household income. In this concern I agree with the models of entrepreneurs' motivation developed by McClelland (1961:128–156) who explained that the entrepreneur is motivated to carry out her business and works relentlessly, which reflects a strong desire for recognition. He also included the dreams and wishes to found a private kingdom; the sensation of power and leadership.

Table 7.4

Scale of Preferences for Female Entrepreneurs to
Join the Savings and Microcredit Projects

Groups	Push Factors	Pull Factors
Thowra (G1)	-Feeling to support their husbands	-Need for more recognition as the result of work - Need to have our own economic and financial resources. -Need to make our own decisions and have control over our own economic resources.
Tea Seller (G2)	-Marital status -Absence of male -Lack of institutional and services support	-Need to contribute to the household economy
Khalawi (G3)	-Support our husbands -Number of children	-Need to secure our future and later life stages. - Need to provide food security for our children.
Production Centre (G4)	-Number of children -Absence of males -Absence of institutional and services support - Lack of resources	-Need financial resources to increase the household income.

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Table 7.4 also indicates that female entrepreneurs prefer to receive microcredits that enable them to be considered both home and market producers and consumers who make optimal choices in pursuit of returns. 94.7% of the participating female entrepreneurs express their choice of increasing returns and income, but ultimately this income and return goes to benefit household members. Entrepreneurs have reported that they need to help their families, to help their husbands (8%), to support their children and 11.7 % to support themselves. 83% of the female entrepreneurs mentioned that the purpose for increasing household income is to overcome household budget constraints, satisfy their children's needs and add to their husbands' incomes as indicated by 92.5 % of Khalawi, 90% of production centre producers ,

80% of the Tea sellers and 77 % of Al Thowra female entrepreneurs. Female entrepreneurs also have their own personal strategic needs that need to be satisfied, as indicated by 16.3% of the female entrepreneurs in terms of supporting themselves and having leisure time and recreation. These personal needs are not significant motivators between the four groups; however the greatest percentage has been represented by 30% of the home producers of Al Thowra, 20% of the market producers of Tea sellers, 3% of home producers of Khalawi and 0% of the market- based of the production centre female entrepreneurs. This indicated that the motivation to increase household income and satisfy household basic needs is stronger than personal needs.

Each microcredit entrepreneur decided to be a microcredit producer, given the technological possibilities, and chose profit maximising activities, as it appears among Kazagil production centre only and represents 10% of the milk production group and 0.7% of the total sample of the female entrepreneurs. Again this motivating factor as indicated by low percentages appears to be the weakest motivating factor among the female entrepreneurs.

Most poverty 'push' factors that have motivated 83% of the poor female entrepreneurs to join the SWGU savings and microcredit projects are caused by the absence of male figures and the responsibility for children. This forces poor female entrepreneurs to be considered as female heads of household and imposes domestic chores in addition to difficult and boring paid work as indicated by the four groups.

Another 'push' factor is the institutional limitations facing 40% of entrepreneurs, mainly the tea sellers and production centre producers in terms of obtaining licenses and health cards. 75% of the tea sellers face constraints in fees and taxes on their business, 81% are constrained by transportation and marketing and 9.1% lack of raw materials during the dry season. These factors increase the entrepreneurs' risk if they are not mitigated by the SWGU. This will be illustrated in Chapter 8: SWGU savings and microcredit projects Impacts.

To support myself, is a motive for undertaking a project in 11.7% of all the entrepreneurs and is represented by 20% of the Tea sellers, 13% of Al Thowra and 2.5% of Khalawi. As reported by the respondents, the cause behind this response can be explained in the morality that forces men to meet their responsibility to provide their wives with a good quality of life. The recognized obligation of the husband is to satisfy the wife's rights and endowments and fair treatment as stipulated in Muslim Personnel Sharia laws. Failing to do so means women

lack a secure means of well-being and exposes women to greater vulnerability and weakness. According to the women, empowerment occurs when they have something in hand, like the assets that improve their ability to create their own well-being instead of being dependent on their husbands.

The last poverty 'push' factor has motivated 8% of the entrepreneurs. It is the desire to support husbands, as indicated by the four groups and represented by 17.5% of Khalawi female entrepreneurs. These women are influenced by the principle of the Islamic education of assisting the weak and poor, especially the relatives. It is important to emphasise that an adequate supply of secure, full-time occupations simply does not exist. 17.5% of Khalawi, 7% of Al Thowra, 8% of production centre and 2% of Tea Sellers female entrepreneurs, lack of security due to their husband's inability to provide food and cash to support the household's well-being motivates them to undertake a project. Security means secure rights and reliable access to resources and food and income. And even if they do work, the returns or work available for their husbands are often not enough to satisfy basic needs, thus forcing women's diversification into other economic activities to make ends meet.

As reported by the female entrepreneurs when asked about poverty, being poor means not having access to basic services, especially education and health, lack of economic security and freedom from fear of disaster, good relationships with others and the ability to make choices and decisions. This raises a challenge for the SWGU Microcredit and Savings Programmes to reduce poverty experienced by women and improve their well-being. However, in this concern Chambers stated that Extreme poverty and ill-being go together, but the link between wealth and well-being is weak or even negative: reducing poverty usually diminishes ill-being but amassing wealth does not assure well-being. (Chambers1997:10).

The 'push' and 'pull' factors express the female entrepreneurs' economic activities which are focused around a secure livelihood, which is considered by Chamber as a basic requirement of well-being. Chambers (1997:10) defined livelihood security as adequate stocks and flows of food and cash to meet basic needs and to support well-being. Security refers to secure rights and reliable access to resources, food, income and basic services. It includes tangible and intangible assets to offset risk, ease shocks and meet contingencies. This will be detailed

in Chapter 8: The Impact of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects at the individual and household levels.

The study has indicated that the most common, known preferences of the female microcredit entrepreneurs are concentrated in three key objectives, profit maximization, increasing income, drudgery aversion and business risk mitigation. However, these preferences are ultimately mediated by the female entrepreneurs' perceptions, aspirations and beliefs and are thus governed by the diversity of their personalities and culture. The decisions made by female entrepreneurs, as revealed in the preferences scale, help to conceptualize a framework for female microcreditors' thinking about the multiple and competing choices that may occur consecutively in decision making about participation in the projects as a coping strategy to increase their earning and alleviate poverty in their households. This decision framework is supported by Davies (1996:269), who developed a similar decision framework in which much emphasis has been laid in understanding the specific livelihood coping strategies adopted in rural Mali following drought, based on the following factors:

1. Levels of returns;
2. Risk, reliability and sustainability; and
3. Drudgery, health, legality.

In some way or another, each of these factors corresponds to a preference scale for female entrepreneurs to join the savings and microcredit projects or decision criteria matrix illustrated above in Table 7.4 by the female entrepreneurs of the SWGU microcredit savings and projects. In conclusion, entrepreneurs' choices and decision making can be constrained in the following ways. While preferences are an important part of understanding female entrepreneurs' objectives and behaviour, there are also constraints that might influence the set of feasible decisions, choice or options. These constraints are related to the imposed economic constraints that generate 'push' factors. It is found that push factors indicate economic constraints, such as the feasible returns and risks that different enterprises offer and which lead to more acceptable or allowed choices.

These poor female entrepreneurs in the four groups they are rational in their choices due to their marital status, which shapes their individual preferences. Kabeer (2001:22) argues that rationality may well be 'bounded', for instance, by meta-preferences that create an 'ought' factor in social choice. Thus preferences, choices and trade-offs are much influenced by

marital status and individual personalities. While female entrepreneurs make personal choices, they are mediated by cultural meta-preference and other individual and personality based preferences.

Female entrepreneurs recognize budgetary constraints, and to a limited degree, problems of inequitable initial endowment and lack of control over resources as indicated by Al Thowra female entrepreneurs in the above mentioned scale of preference. As discussed in chapter two This scale of preference is in agreement with Bharadwaj, who criticized the neo-classical model which can incorporate, in a limited way, some inequalities in resource endowments into its model, and some forms of market imperfection but it cannot give space to systematic discrimination which occurs in the exchange system originating from social distinctions, such as class, caste or sex, (Bharadwaj1994: 360). One of the neo-classical model is explained before in chapter two by Sen (1987:68) about the entitlement approach and the allocation of resources within the household and the link between the intra-household allocation of resources and the process of decision-making within the household with questions of legitimacy and how household arrangements may be structured unequally, and how that structuring actually takes place.

Finally, it is clear that all the female microcredit entrepreneurs' responses have indicated that there is no option and the microcredit projects are their only chance to move from destitution and starvation. Savings and microcredit projects selected from available choices and options by the rational female entrepreneurs have been carefully examined against their preferences for income and their enterprises risks. The final outcome, however, depends on their ability to balance their situation against another in order to produce an acceptable result. In other words, there are trade-offs' between one preference and another, and the perceived levels of risk and return. This study shows that female entrepreneurs make trade-offs and, particularly at the level of the household, outcomes are usually negotiated with their husbands, mothers or mother-in-laws through conflict or bargaining. Trade-offs may vary by age, gender, religion and class, being both culturally and individually determined. Chambers (1997:10) argues that notions of well-being allow people themselves to define the criteria of a good life that are important to them. This may result in a range of outcomes including self-esteem, meaning, security, happiness, power, as well as more conventionally measured material concerns. Stated like this, well-being appears to have many similarities to utility. However, utility presupposes that female entrepreneurs have the full power of agency to make

logical choices and construct economic strategies. Well-being is a purely descriptive term with no underlying assumptions about the feasibility of achieving the desired outcomes, nor the constraints that may act to limit choice. The following section is strengthened by the data collected in the field from the female entrepreneurs about what motivated them to make their choices.

. **Women Beneficiary**

. . **The initiation of the microcredit projects ideas**

The initiation of the decision made by the female entrepreneurs to join the SWGU savings and microcredit projects illustrate how much the female entrepreneurs are conscious about their situation and also that they are strong enough to make their own decisions. The initiation of these ideas will be analysed from the responses of the female entrepreneurs as indicated in the following Table 7.5 and Diagram 7.3 below.

Table 7.5 and Diagram 7.3 below show that 81% of the women initiated their own microcredit project ideas. 90% are the milk production producers and 85% are the tea sellers who selected their projects based on their long experience, capabilities, skills, lower risk and creation of quick, substantial returns. The percentage was lower among Al Thowra, 84%, and Khalawi, 70%, where room had been given to other family members to assist in choosing the projects. Most importantly, the project ideas emerged from the women themselves, who made their own decisions and selected their projects because they are the ones who know best about their needs, skills and capabilities.

Table 7.5 and Diagram 7.3 below show that for 12.3% of the women, project ideas emerged from her relatives. This is the case among Khalawi, Tea sellers and Al Thowra female entrepreneurs which represent 20%, 11% and 10% respectively. Allowing room for relatives to choose the projects means that women do not have full confidence in themselves to choose their projects and also that they are weak and hesitant to make their own decisions. According to the female entrepreneurs, the project ideas are mainly initiated by the husband or the eldest son who then assisted the women in managing their projects since these projects are new for them and they do not have a background in such work. For more detail see Table 7.6 and Diagram 7.4 which illustrated the women's lack of experience.

Inherited microcredit projects ideas represent 4.7% of the women. These women have inherited the means of production, like the land, animals and equipment from their relatives. 5% are from Kordufan State where traditional modes of agriculture prevail. 4.3% are from Omdurman State as indicated by 5% for both Thowra and Khalawi female entrepreneurs and 4% of Tea Sellers who inherited their microcredit projects. Availability of such assets assisted female entrepreneurs to make their decision and select their economic projects. 2% of the female entrepreneurs indicated that others, mainly from the SWGU staff and the mass media transmitted through the SWGU radio programme. These two mediums assisted in the initiation of the project ideas. SWGU staff working at local levels served as strong popular medium among local women, spreading information about the bank credit facilities. Among Khalawi women, 5% emphasized that these two mediums assisted in the initiation of the project ideas.

Table 7.5

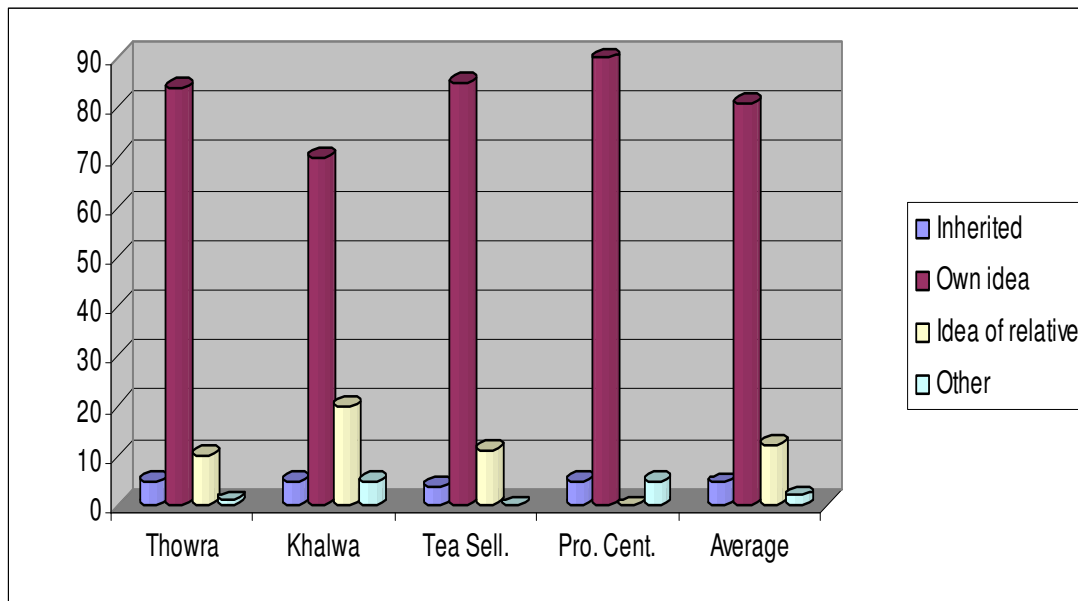
The Initiation of the Savings and Microcredit Projects Ideas

Initiation	Thowra		Khalawi		Tea Sellers		Production Centre (G4)		Average
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Inherited	5	5	4	5	4	4	1	5	4.7
Own idea	84	84	56	70	85	85	18	90	81
Idea of relative	10	10	16	20	11	11	0	0	12.3
Other	1	1	4	5	0	0	1	5	2
Total	100	100	80	100	100	100	20	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.3

The Initiation of the Savings and Microcredit Projects Ideas



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

. 2 Female entrepreneurs' previous involvement in economic activities

Table 7.6

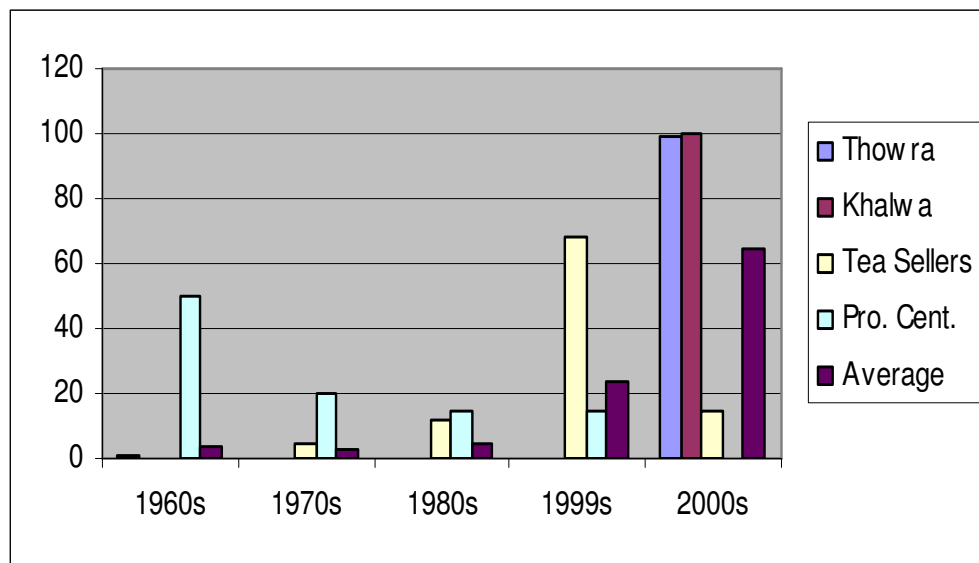
Female Entrepreneurs Previous Involvement in Economic Activities

Year	Thowra		Khalawi		Tea seller		Production Centre (G4)		Average
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
1960s	1	1	0	0	0	0	10	50	3.6
1970s	0	0	0	0	5	5	4	20	3
1980s	0	0	0	0	12	12	3	15	5
1990s	0	0	0	0	68	68	3	15	23.6
2000s	99	99	80	100	15	15	0	0	64.7
Total	100	100	80	100	100	100	20	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.4

Female Entrepreneurs Previous Involvement
in Economic Activities



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

The results of the study, as indicated in the Table 7.6 and Diagram 7.4 above, show that 64.7% of the target group, mainly Khalawi and Thowra women, do not have previous experience in their economic activities before joining the SWGU microcredit and saving projects. They have joined the SWGU savings and microcredit projects at the end of 1999 and in 2000 as home producers. In other words, 64.7% witness great mobility in their economic activities which had been limited to household and mother roles to begin income generating activities.

35.3% of the women in the sample had previous experience of more than thirty years before joining the SWGU savings and microcredit projects. Milk production female entrepreneurs is the largest group, 50% of female entrepreneurs had previous experience in this sector. Then the percentage decreases to 20% in 1970s and then again decreased to reach 15 % during 1980s and 1990s. Milk production entrepreneurs reported that these decreases were due to the drought that hit Western Sudan as well as conflict between the tribes over grazing land. The female entrepreneurs added that the situation caused greater poverty and vulnerability, especially when most households lost huge numbers of their livestock.

During 1990s, before joining the SWGU microcredit and saving projects, milk production entrepreneurs reported that they worked as casual or seasonal milk production labourers for cash wages. According to the women, they faced many constraints working as milk production labourers. They received a small amount of money compared to male labourers, and sometimes they did not receive it in time but after selling the products. During the milk production season they devoted huge efforts and an enormous workload compared to what they received. They suffered from a lack of new technology and equipment that would have facilitated their work.

Although they did have a business track record, they found it hard to obtain financing to start a new business. Since they were not able to meet their daily needs, they lacked financial resources to buy their own equipment or adopt new technology for establishing their own cheese production unit. 6.7% of the women shifted from working as wage labours and have their own milk production projects due to joining the SWGU microcredit and saving projects at the end of 1999 and 2000. In fact, in this segment mobility is very important and needs creativity and competitiveness to enter the market properly.

A few Tea Sellers entrepreneurs have had experience since the 1970s or 1980s. 68% of them worked as market producers and were involved in the informal sectors of making and selling tea since the 1990's. The Tea Sellers entrepreneurs attributed this trend to the fact that during the 1960s and 1970s, tea making and selling was not regarded as a market based business, but during the late 1970s and 1980s a lot of people migrated to Khartoum due to drought and conflict. Women were forced to enter the informal sectors looking for economic resources to feed their families. Thus in the 1990s a large number of those who migrated from the western part of Sudan found this informal job to increase their income for their households' survival.

However, 85% of the Tea Sellers have had previous experience using traditional techniques of tea making which consume a lot of time, energy and money using charcoal and firewood as sources of energy. 15% of Tea Sellers were new to this economic activity upon joining the SWGU microcredit and saving projects. The traditional tea sellers and the new tea sellers learned to use cheaper technologies to make their businesses more efficient when using gas as source of energy than charcoal.

With time, the involvement of women in the informal sectors of milk production, tea selling and other economic activities carried out by Khalawi and Thowra female entrepreneurs leads to a gradual increase in numbers from an average of 3.6 % in the 1960s to the average of 64.7% in the 2000s. Female entrepreneurs joined the SWGU microcredit savings and projects due to the prevailing phenomena of the feminisation of poverty in Sudan as illustrated in Chapter 4. In this concern, the study of the SWGU microcredit savings and projects will raise an important issue about what to do with those left behind.

The results of the study have shown that to alleviate poverty the female entrepreneurs' concept of investment includes many aspects of economic activity. They do not limit their investment to agriculture but also to non-agricultural activities that prove to be complementary. Complementary activities do not compete with agricultural activities as is sometimes perceived by microcreditors. This economic mobility will influence financial institutions as we shall see in this chapter. The projects are now moving beyond agricultural finance and addressing both the growing markets of non agricultural households and businesses.

. . . The Communication channels

Table 7.7

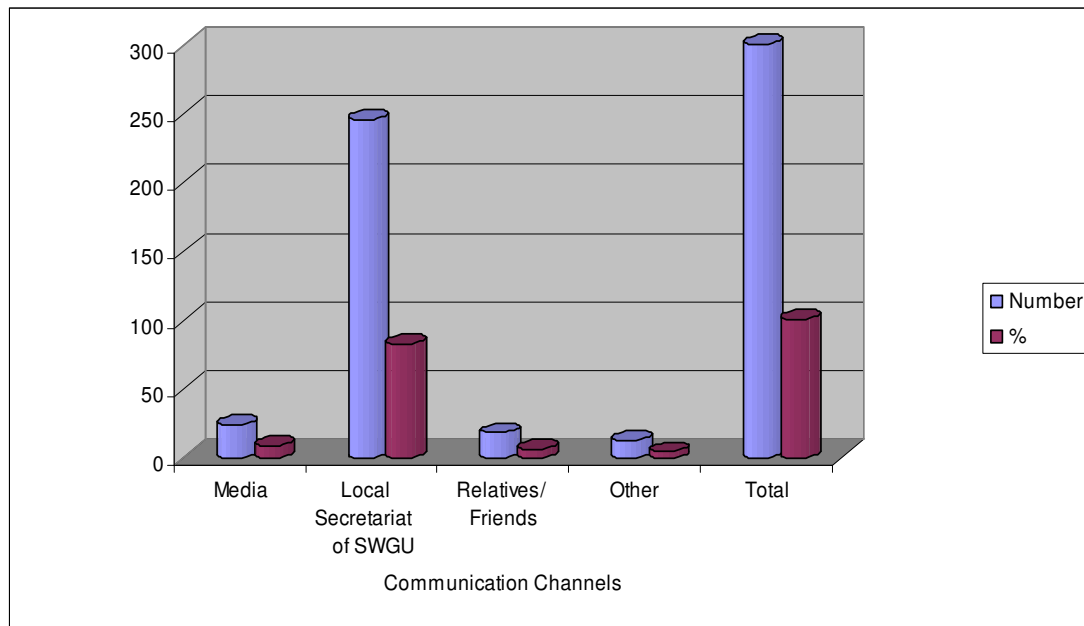
The Communication Channels Assisting
in the Identification of the Microcredit Projects

Channels	Number	%
Media	24	8
Local Secretariat of SWGU	246	82
Relatives/Friends	18	6
Other	12	4
Total	300	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.5

The Communication Channels Assisting in the Identification of the Microcredit Projects



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

As indicated in the poverty alleviation policy - Chapter five, the propaganda for joining the poverty reduction projects at grassroots levels comes through the NGOs or mass communication channels. Table 7.7 and Diagram 7.5 above show that the SWGU as a NGO played an important part in telling poor women about the savings and microcredit projects. The results of the study have indicated that 82% of the female entrepreneurs identified the savings and microcredit projects through the SWGU local basic secretariat personnel at grassroots level. SWGU Local and Basic Secretariat personnel at the grassroots level are spreading information among local women about these microcredit projects to assist their chances for financial opportunities. The SWGU Local and Basic Secretariat personnel at grassroots levels play important role in facilitating the financial process and encourage different financial institutions and the banks to finance poor women's microcredit projects. This indicates that the poverty eradication program and the SWGU microcredit projects have achieved some of their stipulated objectives for the microcredit projects by mobilising great percentage (82%) of rural women and communicated the information about the microcredit projects. While little percentage (8%) of the female entrepreneurs had obtained the information about the SWGU savings and microcredit projects from the media communication channel through the radio.

.. **Methods of reaching the banks**

Table 7.8

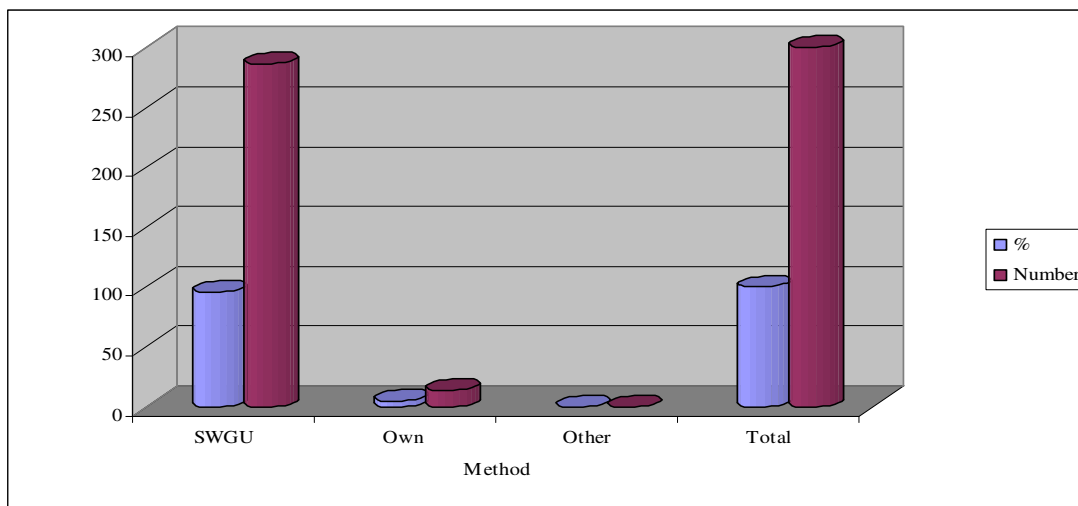
Methods of Reaching the Banks

Methods	%	Number
SWGU	95.3	286
Own	4.7	14
Other	0	0

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.6

Methods of Reaching the Banks



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

It is clear from the Table 7.8 and Diagram 7.6 above that 95.3% of the female entrepreneurs depend on the SWGU staff to reach the banks and obtain credit. This indicates the important role played by the SWGU as a popular local NGO to mediate between poor female entrepreneurs and financial institutions. At the same time female entrepreneurs become dependent on local SWGU to perform these banking processes, which indicates that the female entrepreneurs are still in a weak position and not empowered enough to create a relationship with the bank.

According to the female entrepreneurs, spatial mobility constrains them from reaching the banks because they live in remote areas and it is difficult for them to travel to the bank. In addition, dealing with bank to obtain the credit requires the execution of different procedures,

preparation of documents and signatures which require literate and knowledgeable female entrepreneurs. According to the SWGU staff, this situation requires a women's association to prepare the required documents, execute the many procedures and collect loan repayments. This would guarantee that credits would reach the targets and the targets would pay back the loan instalments. This situation raises critical challenge and issues. Are women in this situation empowered to reach and create relationships with banks by themselves? How and when will women be empowered by the SWGU? Only 4.7 % of the women from the microcredit projects managed to reach the bank and perform all the banking procedures and got the credits alone.

- . **Financial institutions for funding the Sudanese Women's General Union savings and microcredit projects**

- . . **Functioning of the financial institutions at the national and state levels**

The following paragraphs explain the role of the SWGU in helping female entrepreneurs gain access to financial resources by creating diversified financial institutions to deliver credits to female entrepreneurs at the state and local levels. This will be facilitated by explaining the economic projects planned by the SWGU–Economic Secretariat at the national level and how that translates to the women's poverty reduction strategy from Chapters 4 and 5. The role of the financial institutions and their performance in terms of budget allocated and utilized until 2004 will also be discussed. In addition, the functioning of these financial institutions at the household level will be elaborated in detail to examine how financial policies, rules and regulations are applied at the grassroots levels and how female entrepreneurs adopt these policies. Finally, the creation of the SWGU administrative structure to administer and control the savings and microcredit projects both at state and local levels will be highlighted.

- . . . **The Sudanese Women's General Union Six Year Plan 1999-2005**

The SWGU Six Year Plan 1999-2005 for the Economic and Development Secretariat includes 36 socio-economic development projects and micro-development projects intended to be carried out during 1999-2005. More details about the socio-economic development projects and the implementing NGO, female target groups, locations, costs and objectives of the

projects are detailed in Chart 6.1 attached to the Annexes-1 pages 457-463: Matrix Plan for the Economic Development Secretariat-Sudanese Women's General Union: 1999- 2005

The plan consists of 36 socio-economic development projects and from their objectives it is clear that they are really reflecting poverty in different states of Sudan and the poverty reduction strategy from Chapter 4 in terms of increasing opportunities of female employment in the informal sector, increasing the household earnings and income, reducing the trend of immigration and internal displacement movements, provision of social services, especially education and literacy classes; health, hygiene and vaccination campaigns; energy and provision of cookers and gas cylinders; food security and human capability projects.

The SWGU Six Year Plan 1999-2005 is also in harmony with the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy, the National Comprehensive Strategy Quarter Century (2003-2027) for the Advancement of Women (2003-2027) and the Mobilization and Social Solidarity Programmes and Income Generation Projects (IGP) as illustrated in Chapter 5.

Concerning the financial institutions in the budget of the plan to execute these socio-economic development projects, it is found that the Ministry of Finance is responsible for the socio-economic development activities which are under the direct or indirect implementation of the SWGU. And as indicated before in Chapter five and six there are two national NGOs, Zakat Social Development Fund and SudaTel, financing the poverty alleviation projects: revolving loan fund and the savings and microcredit projects of the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy. In addition, the state ministry of finance is also responsible for funding these projects. Thus the SWGU has to make sure that the funds from these financial institutions are really reaching the target female entrepreneurs. The total estimated fund was equal to 958.55 million SD. The SWGU has to coordinate with the five major implementing ministries and 21 nongovernmental organisations that are responsible for the implementation of these projects. These ministries and nongovernmental organisations are clearly indicated in the SWGU Six Year Plan 1999-2005 for the Economic and Development Secretariat. From the SWGU Six Year Plan 1999-2005, it is clear that 10 out of 36 projects, 27.8% of the total socio-economic development poverty reduction projects planned, were being exclusively implemented by the SWGU and financed by the Ministry of Finance, SudaTel and others sources like Zakat Social Development Fund and Credit and Social Development Bank. Most of these projects are the microcredit and savings and poverty reduction and revolving

loan fund projects. The total cost of these projects was estimated to be equal to 754.5 million SD which is equal to 78.7% of the total budget.

The other 26 socio-economic development projects which are estimated to be equal to 72.2% of the poverty reduction development projects were planned to be implemented by the SWGU in coordination with other ministries and non-government organizations. The total budget for the implementation of the socio-economic development for poverty reduction projects was estimated to be equal to 204.05 million SD which is equal to 21.3% of the total planned budget. The SWGU plays a vital role in the coordination of the implementation of these poverty reduction projects through its well institutionalized SWGU organisational structure at all levels. For more details see the organizational structure in the attached Annexe-1: Chart 6.2 page 451.

As it can be noted from Table 6.2 Plan for the Distribution of the SudaTel Credit –First Batch, 1999 for the implementation of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Mobilization for Social Solidarity and Production Programme there were many NGOs participated in the implementation of the plan. Some NGOs got their funds from SudaTel to implement the female savings and microcredit projects at grassroots levels but they found difficulties in the implementation process and in reaching the poor female target groups due to weaknesses in their organizational structure and lack of required qualified staff at local levels. They also found difficulties coordinating with some banks' branches to channel and financially administer the female microcredit projects. Thus the SWGU managed to play a leading role in the coordination and the implementation of the Mobilisation and Social Solidarity Productive Programme through the SWGU female staff and coordination with available banks like the Agriculture Bank to administer the savings and microcredit projects as we shall see this in chapter and Chapter 8.

To achieve the SWGU Six Year Plan 1999-2005 objectives, there are three major financial institutions that are responsible for the financing of the plan. These were Zakat Fund and the SudaTel Corporation as illustrated in Chapter 5 which channelled their funds through the Credit and Social Development Bank and Agriculture Bank or in some cases the Industrial Bank and the State Ministry of Finance. According to the SWGU report (2000:4), the budget that was approved is equal to 500,000,000 SD which equal to 66.3% of total fund (SWGU Economic Development Secretariat in the Matrix Plan 1999-2005. However, for specific

disadvantaged states like Bahar Al Gazal, other funds were allocated, including 5 million SD from the president to encourage the implementation of female savings and microcredit projects in the Southern states.

These financial institutions have been trying to meet the socio-economic development objectives set by the SWGU Six Year Plan 1999-2005 for the female savings and microcredit projects that address the feminization of poverty as discussed in Chapter 4. They have been working toward satisfying the objectives of the Comprehensive National Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Comprehensive National Poverty Reduction Strategy Quarter Century (2003-2027) for the Advancement of Women and effectively assisting in the implementation of the Mobilization and Social Solidarity Productive Programme. The economic development objectives of the female savings and microcredit projects can be summarized as:

1. Provision of a sufficient and accurate database to be used effectively for poverty reduction and appropriate planning and evaluation of the female savings and microcredit projects.
2. Raising living standards of poor families through involving female entrepreneurs in production and income generating activities.
3. Encouraging female entrepreneurs to utilize the locally input production materials available at harvesting seasons in small scale industries, processing and food conservation activities.
4. Directing funds toward female entrepreneurs in rural areas to mitigate rural urban migration and internally displaced persons.
5. Strengthening social collaborative solidarity among female entrepreneurs.
6. Increasing women's education about banking and money transactions.
7. Increasing participation of women in economic activities and promoting self reliance.
8. Strengthening the links between SWGU institutions at all levels and the financial institutions and the banks that have concerns in female microcredit and savings activities.
9. Strengthening rural women's decision making through group work and collaborative activities.

. . .2 Financial institutions supporting female savings and microcredit projects

The Social Development Authority under the Ministry of Social Affairs allocated funds to SWGU for the implementation of savings and microcredit projects as was discussed in Chapter 3. This was a first batch to start the female savings and microcredit projects in ten states in 1999 and then gradually cover all the states of Sudan by the end of 2005. The financial institutions assisting in the implementation were the Credit and Social Development Bank (funded by Zakat Social Development Fund: Ministry of Social Affairs) and SudaTel Corporation. In some states, as we shall see below, Credit and Social Development Bank facilities were not available, which hindered many NGOs' participation in the implementation of the female microcredit projects. Female entrepreneurs were not getting access to credit, but the SWGU managed to create links with Agriculture Bank branches available in these states to implement and administer the funds. SWGU even managed to mobilize funds from the Agriculture Bank ceiling budget to finance future microcredit projects.

The target groups indicated in the SWGU Six Year Plan for the female entrepreneurs' savings and microcredit projects included female headed households, poor female students, female production cooperatives, widows, divorcees, and wives of handicapped husbands, internally displaced families, female prisoners and their children and other women who took the initiative to establish their microcredit projects. Due to war and conflict at West Darfur this state was excluded and nine states were targeted to start implementation of the projects as planned. Gradually activities would expand to cover all states of Sudan. Due to delays in the implementation of the Social Mobilization for Solidarity and Family Production Program, the SWGU female savings and microcredit projects were started at state levels in 2000 in eight states. The northern states rate of implementation was equal to 88.9% except for one state in southern Sudan with the rate of implementation of 11.1%. As discussed in Chapter 4, the root cause of poverty in Sudan is the inequality in resource distribution among different states. The same attitudes prevail for the implementation of the female savings and microcredit projects.

. . . Roles of the financial institutions and the Sudanese Women's General Union

According to the BOS (2000:2) Report and the SWGU Report (1999:2) the Bank and SWGU Memorandum for the implementation of the female microcredit projects, the SWGU, the state and the bank each had a role to play. The financial institutions assist in:

1. Writing detailed bank policy based on the Sudan Bank Policy–Islamic rules and regulations (as discussed in Chapter six). Clarifying roles of the bank including preparation of the feasibility study of the female microcredit projects which includes project expenditure, profit and repayment. The bank has the right to change the female microcredit projects proposals submitted by the state SWGU secretariat if found unfeasible after negotiation with the state SWGU staff.
2. Setting aside 10% of the bank’s ceiling fund to establish a female savings and microcredit projects revolving loan fund.
3. Distributing 15% of the annual peripheral profit as follows: 50% goes to the Credit and Social Development Bank for the administrative cost and 50% to the SWGU at the state to meet the SWGU administrative staff costs. In case there is no facility for the Credit and Social Development Bank and the Agriculture Bank performs this administrative task, the Agriculture Bank receives 7% of the profit value, the Credit and Social Development Bank receives 4% and the SWGU receives 4%. This applies when using SudaTel funds but for Zakat Fund.
4. Deciding on the financial mode used for the female microcredit projects and imposing collateral which includes the personal collateral, compulsory savings, reduction from the salary, oath on Holy Quran, production equipment mortgage and chiefs of Traditional Local Authority (Ommdah /Shikh).
5. Assuring that interest rates do not exceed 2%, adopt Gard Hassan with Zakat fund credits, individual loan which should not exceed 75,000 SD and assuring loan instalments are paid within 6-12 months with 3 month grace period for the loan depending on the project.
6. Creating female microcredit profiles and opening bank accounts to facilitate rural entrepreneurs with cash or kind loans, preparing filing systems and opening a file for each female entrepreneur, carrying out joint monthly field visits with the female SWGU staff to follow-up the projects performance and preparing the monthly periodic report on the performance of the female microcredit projects. Training the SWGU's staff and the female entrepreneurs in all banking processes

While the state and the SWGU staff’s role includes:

1. Contributing 1.5-2 million SD from the State Ministry of Finance.
2. Opening a bank account under the name of the SWGU Savings and Microcredit Fund: Mahfazat Al Marra'a by the state.
3. Forming the female microcredit consultative committee as we shall see later in this chapter. Recruiting the required female microcredit manager, supervisors and accounting staff responsible for the administration of the project at state and local levels. Providing training and capacity building for the cadre of SWGU at state and local levels for the administration of the female microcredit savings projects. Training female entrepreneurs in collateral processes and banking processes.
4. Receiving the agreed share of the peripheral profit as illustrated above to pay the SWGU administrative staff and paying back any loan.
5. Preparing the list of the project proposals with the female entrepreneurs. And signing of the collateral documents for financing female microcredit projects.
6. Follow up on female entrepreneurs' savings and microcredit projects, collect the repayment of instalments and submitting bi-monthly reports to the bank manager.

In 2000 bank policy was extended to include the Agriculture Bank to implement the female savings and microcredit projects on behalf of the Credit and Social Development Bank in the states where there were no branches of the Credit and Social Development Bank. Agriculture Bank was granted this responsibility based on the following rules:

1. The bank must feed the required fund for the implementation of the female entrepreneurs' savings and microcredit projects at Bahar Al Gazal state, Western and Northern Darfur states, Al Fashir.
2. The two banks must agree on the Murabaha mode of finance and on the distribution of a 15% of the annual peripheral profit to cover the cost of the administrative staff.
3. Performing the same bank policy regulations and executing the same role as described above.

. . . The contribution of the financial institutions

As it has been indicated in Table 7.9 below, the amount allocated in 1999 by the Credit and Social Development Bank and SudaTel to open state bank accounts under the name of the female microcredit and savings profile was to be distributed to ten states. The financial contribution of SudaTel was equal to 15,470,000 SD which was distributed fairly between

seven districts each 2,200,000 SD. The contribution of the Credit and Social Development Bank was equal to 19,000,000 SD which was distributed to 6 states. Northern Kordufan and Khartoum states which got a large share of 5 million SD each, Northern Darfur 3 million SD and Al Gezira, Nahar Al Neil and Gadarif 2 million SD each. In total Northern Kordufan received the largest amount of 7,210,000 SD (2.2 m SD from the state) for savings and microcredit projects. Only one state from the southern Sudan got a chance to benefit from the savings and microcredit projects, Bahr Al Gazal. Again, the bias of financial allocation between different states is clear.

Comparing the fund allocated with Table 4.18 The Distribution of Poor Female Headed Households (Northern States) discussed in Chapter 5, funding of the female savings and microcredit projects by the states was not in harmony with the feminization of poverty trends in northern and southern Sudan states. Yes, Khartoum has a large number of poor female headed households and ranked as number one in poverty ranking. Number two in the poverty ranking is Darfur, which was expected to get more funds due to the large number of poor female headed households. But in the process of the implementation, Kordufan state received more funds than Khartoum and Darfur. Therefore, more microcredit projects were funded in Kordufan than in Darfur. In fact, Southern Darfur was affected by war and conflict situations, thus the projects could not continue after being implemented. See Table 7:9 below.

Table 7.9

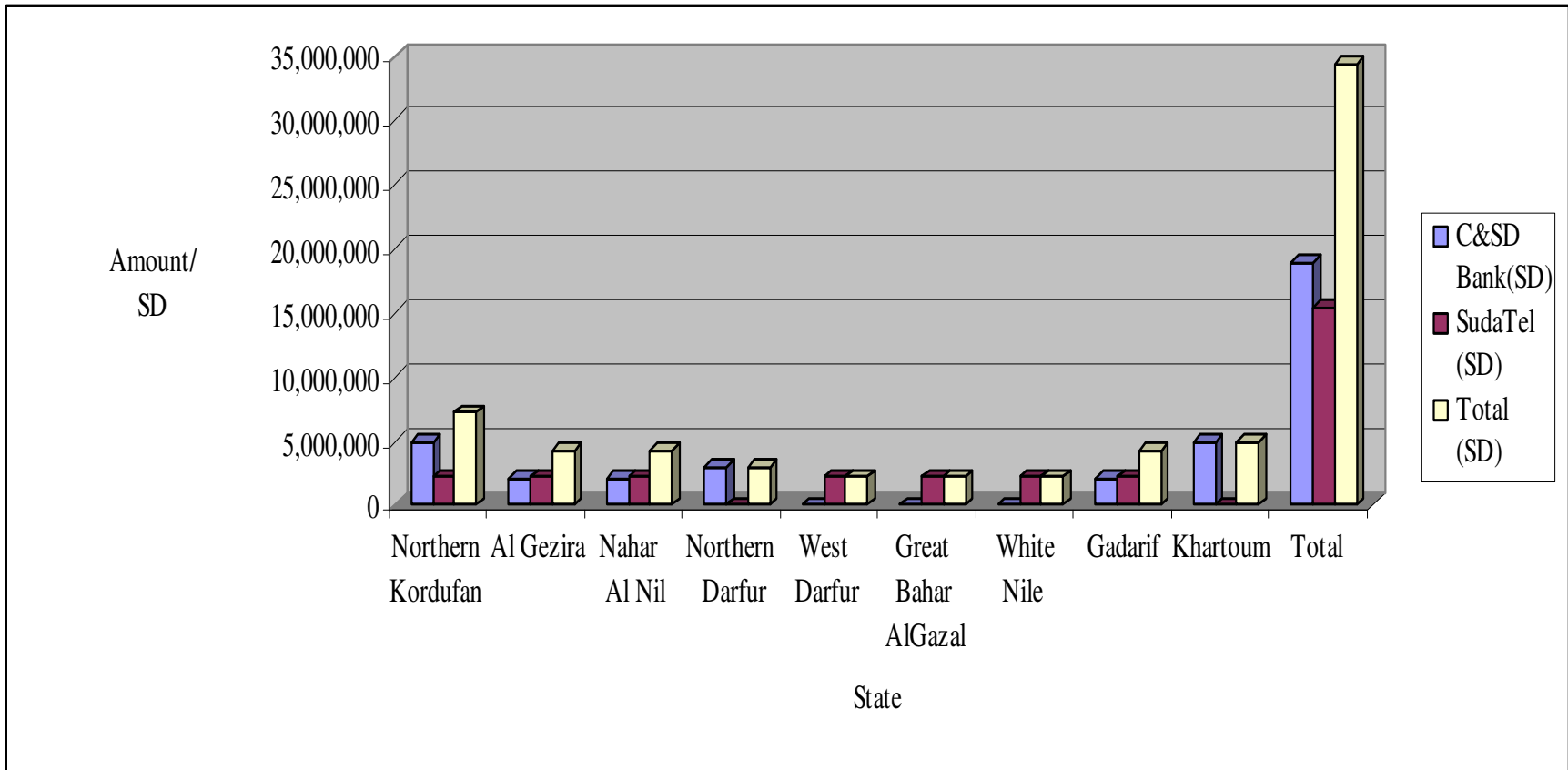
Savings and Microcredit Projects Planned Fund from
Credit and Social Development Bank, 1999

Name of the State	Funding Institutions		Total (SD)
	Credit and Social Development Bank (SD)	SudaTel (SD)	
Northern Kordufan	5,000,000	2,210,000	7,210,000
Al Gezira	2,000,000	2,210,000	4,210,000
Nahar Al Nil	2,000,000	2,210,000	4,210,000
Northern Darfur	3,000,000	-	3,000,000
West Darfur	-	2,210,000	2,210,000
Great Bahar Al Gazal	-	2,210,000	2,210,000
White Nile	-	2,210,000	2,210,000
Gadarif	2,000,000	2,210,000	4,210,000
Khartoum	5,000,000	-	5,000,000
Total	19,000,000	15,470,000	34,470,000

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Report (SWGU 2000b:3)

Diagram 7.7

Savings and Microcredit Projects Planned Fund from Credit and Social Development Bank,
1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Report (SWGU 2004:3)

Table 7.10

Plan Submitted to the Credit and Social Development Bank for
Funding Female Savings and Microcredit Projects
2000 -2004

Name of the State	Total (MSD)		
	2000 (MSD)	2002 (MSD)	2004 (MSD)
Northern Kordufan	2.2	4.4	6.6
Al Gezira	2.2	4.4	6.6
Nahar Al Nil	2.2	4.4	6.6
Northern Darfur	2.2	4.4	6.6
West Darfur	2.2	4.4	6.6
Great Bahar Al Gazal	2.2	4.4	6.6
White Nile	2.2	4.4	6.6
Gadarif	2.2	4.4	6.6
Khartoum	2.2	4.4	6.6
Total	19.8	36.6	59.4

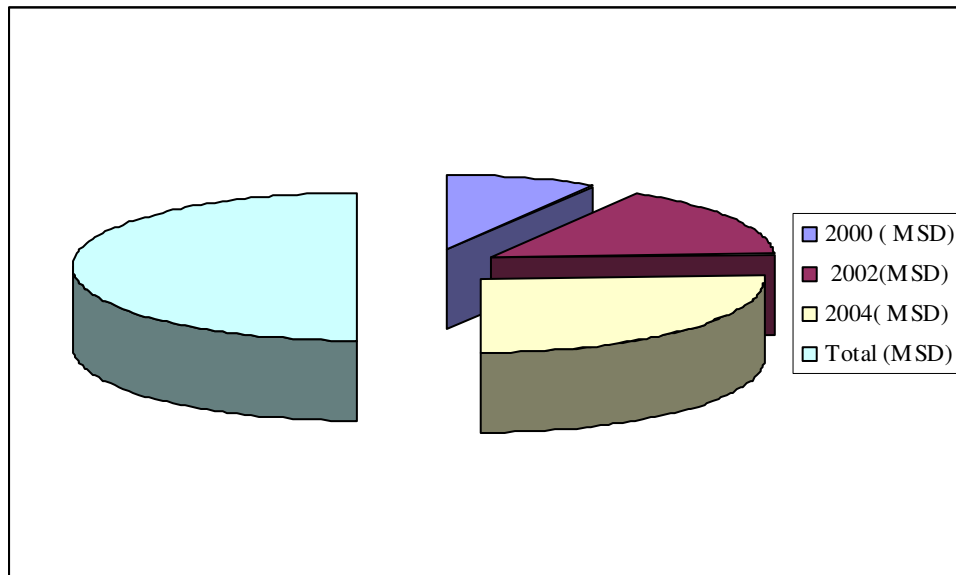
Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2005:3)

New states were added to the plan these are: Northern state with planned fund 6.6 million SD,
Kassala state with planned fund 6.6 million SD, Sinnar state with planned fund 6.6 million SD
Read Sea state with planned fund 6.6 million SD

Total Budget 26.4 million SD for the new four states.

Diagram 7.8

Plan Submitted to the Credit and Social Development Bank for
Funding Female Savings and Microcredit Projects
2000 -2004



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2005:3)

Table 7.10 and Diagram 7.8 above indicate that the total fund for the first 9 states was planned to be equal to 19.8 m SD in 2000, 36.6 m SD in 2002 and in 2004 the fund was 59.4 m SD. This means that the fund would be doubled every two years. The total fund for the expansion of the projects for the first nine states was approved up to 2004. For the new additional 4 states only 5 million SD was approved for each of the four states (as we indicated in Table 7.14 Performance of the SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects Year-2003).

The impact of the SWGU in facilitating poverty related financial access to the Credit and Social Development Bank by rural poor female entrepreneurs can be analyzed from the information in Table 4.18 Distribution of Poor Families by Northern States, Chapter 4, and SWGU Report 2003 in Table 7.20 Performance of SWGU Female Microcredit and Savings Projects Up to 2004 in this chapter as compiled in the Table 7.11 and Diagram 7.9 below:

Table 7.11

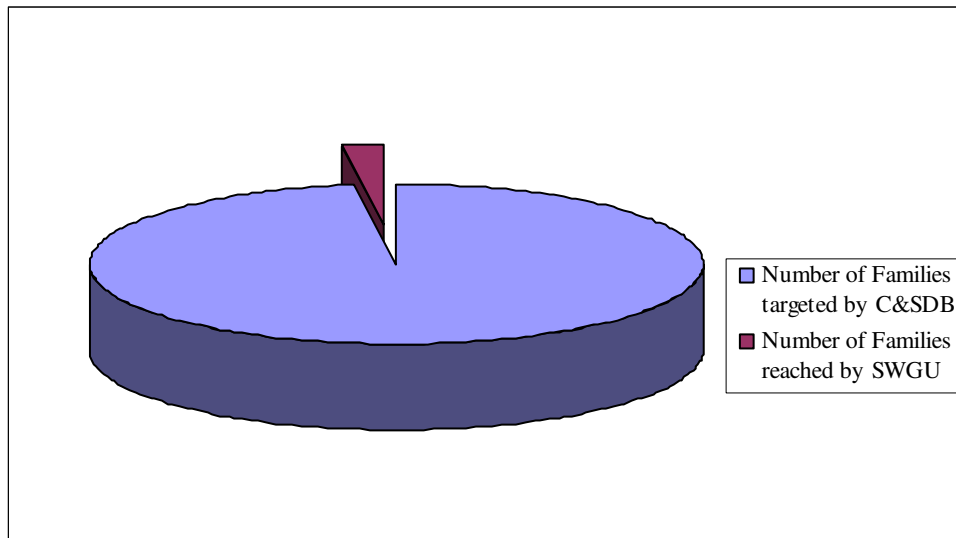
Distribution of the Credit and Social Development Bank
Poor Productive Families by State, 1999 - 2003

State	Number of Families reached by C&SDB	Number of Families reached by SWGU	Percentage
Khartoum	8,000	78	0.1
Al Gezira State	563	25	4.44
Nahar Al Neil	3393	44	1.3
Red Sea	320	0	0
Gadarif	329	46	14
Kassala State	1,566	0	0
White Nile	1,373	42	3.1
Sinnar	19,726	0	0
Northern Kordufan	99	267	
Northern Darfur	1,050	60	5.7
Southern Darfur	0	70	
Western Darfur	0	202	
Bahar Al Gazal	0	32	
Total	36419	866	2.4

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad and Khalafallah 2001:11) ,
SWGU Reports (SWGU 2000b:3) & (SWGU 2003:3)

Diagram 7.9

Contribution of the SWGU in Reaching Productive Families,
1999 - 2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad and Khalafallah 2001:11), SWGU Reports (SWGU 2000b:3) & (SWGU 2003:3)

From Diagram 7.9 and Table 7.11 Distribution of the Credit and Social Development Bank Poor Productive Families by State, 1999 – 2003, SWGU reached 2.4% of the families targeted by the Credit and Social Development Bank. In other words, SWGU managed to reach 866 female entrepreneurs through the SWGU savings and microcredit projects at ten states for the year 1999 as planned by the Credit and Social Development Bank. To reduce the bias in the distribution of financial resources the SWGU managed to elicit funds from Credit and Social Development Bank for three states which were not planned to be covered in 1999. These states include Southern Darfur, 70 female entrepreneurs, Western Darfur, 202 female entrepreneurs, through Agriculture Bank, and Bahr Al Gazal, 32 female entrepreneurs through Agriculture Bank. Again, in the implementation it is clear that the Credit and Social Development Bank had not planned to include the Southern states in 1999, but the SWGU influenced bank policy, adding female entrepreneurs from Bahar Al Gazal and channelling their funds through the Agriculture Bank.

Table 6.2 Distribution Plan of SudaTel Credit- First Batch 1999 shows that the SWGU had great impact in the utilization on 19.36% of the SudaTel budget of 19,989,719 SD. 103,199,997 SD was the total budget allocated for all NGOs. SWGU also reached 11.5% of

the female entrepreneurs planned to be covered by SudaTel, 308 out of 2669 female entrepreneurs, in 1999.

Table 7.12

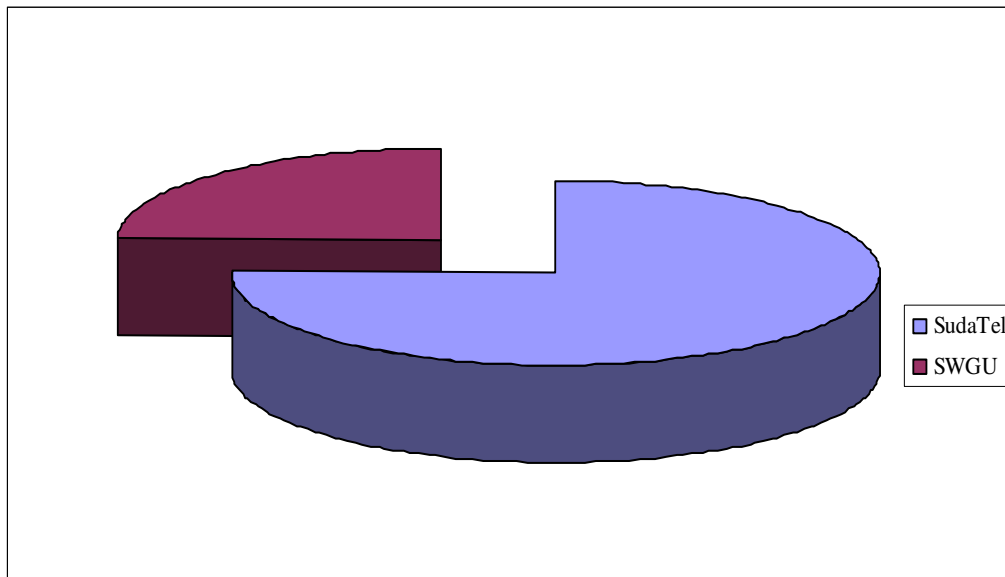
Contribution of the SWGU in Reaching the Female
Entrepreneurs Targeted by SudaTel in 1999

	Budget	Target
SudaTel	103,199,997	2669
SWGU	19989719	308
Percentage	19.39	11.5

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWGU 1999:2) and (SWGU 2000b:3)

Diagram 7.10

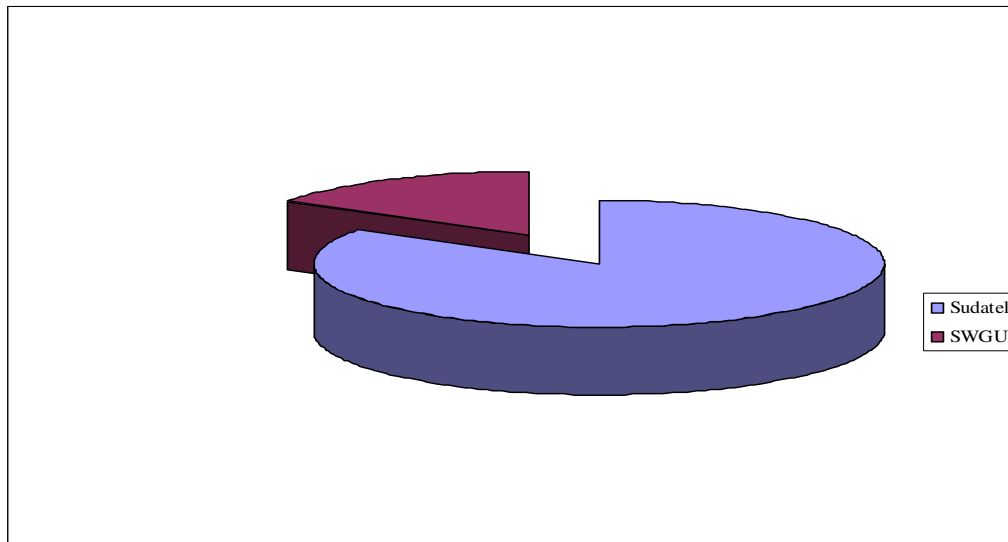
Contribution of the SWGU in Reaching the Female Entrepreneurs
Targeted by SudaTel 1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWGU 1999:2) and (SWGU 2000b:3)

Diagram 7.11

Contribution of the SWGU in the Implementation of
SudaTel Budget -1999



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWG U 1999:2) and (SWG U 2000b:3)

In 1999 SudaTel budget did not allocate funds for Bahar Al Gazal state but, to cover at least one southern State, the SWGU managed to elicit funds from SudaTel as indicated in Table 7.9 savings and microcredit projects Planned Fund from Credit and Social Development Bank, 1999.

Table 7:13 below indicates that not until the end of 2000 did the female entrepreneurs of SWGU savings and microcredit projects start the repayment of their loans as indicated above. In two states, Northern Kordufan and Nahar Al Nil, there was a low percentage of repayment. However, the highest percentage of repayment, equal to 45%, is recorded for Northern Kordufan with an increase in the revolving loan fund equal to 2,200,000 SD and 3.65% of the allocated fund. 36% of repayment is recorded for Nahar Al Nil with a decrease in funds under utilization. Other states recorded no repayment since the loans had not completed one year. Khartoum states' first priority was the implementation of the Marketing Centre. 34 female entrepreneurs were then given Gard Hassan microcredit loans.

Table 7.13 Performance of Female Savings and Microcredit Projects Implemented at 2000 -2001

No	Name of the State	Starting Date	Allocated Fund		Fund under Utilization (SD)	Number of Women	Repayment (SD)	Percentage of Repayment	Executed Micro Finance Institution	Remarks
			SudaTel (SD)	Bank Ceiling Fund (SD)						
1	Northern Kordufan	2000	2,200,000	9,300,000	11,500,000	210	5,150,000	45%	Credit and SD Bank	
2	Al Gezira	2000	2,200,000	-	2,200,000	25	-	-	Credit and SD Bank	Started end of December 2001 No repayment from women
3	Nahar Al Nil	2000	2,200,000	-	1,790,000	20	644,724	36%	Credit and SD Bank	
4	Northern Darfur	2001	2,200,000	-	1,779,900	78	-	-	Agriculture Bank	Started end of December 2001 No repayment from women
5	West Darfur	2001	2,200,000	-	2,286,000	100	-	-	Agriculture Bank	Started end of December 2001 No repayment from women
6	Great Bahar Al Gazal	2001	2,200,000	-	-	-	-	-	Agriculture Bank	Started end of December 2001 No repayment from women
7	White Nile	2001	2,200,000	-	448,010	3	-	-	Credit and SD Bank	Started end of December 2001 No repayment from women
8	Gadarif	2001	2,200,000	-	1,830,000	36	-	-	Credit and SD Bank	Started end of December 2001 No repayment from women
9	Khartoum	2000	2,200,000	-	2,000,000	34	-	-	Credit and SD B.	First the preference was given for the Implementation of the Marketing Centre only – then as Gard Hassan - No return
	Total		19,800,000	9,300,000	23,833,910	506	5,794,724	24.30%		

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Report (SWGUG2002:2)-Percentage of repayment means the percentage of female entrepreneurs who managed to repay their instalments in time.

Table 7.14

Performance of SWGU Female Saving and Microcredit Projects up to 2003

No	Name of the State	Starting Year of the project	Planned	Allocated	Size of Utilized	Number of Women	Payment (SD)	Percentage of Repayment	Executed Micro Finance	Remarks
			Fund (SD)	Fund (SD).	Fund (SD)				Institution	
1	Northern Kordufan	2000	7,210,000	7,000,000	12,000,000	267	12,200,000	85%	Credit and SD Bank	
2	Al Gezira	2000	4,210,000	2,200,000	1,200,000	25	-	0%	Credit and SD Bank	Fund used for the establishment Of the Productive centre
3	Nahar Al Nil	2000	4,210,000	2,200,000	1,700,000	44	1,292,000	76%	Credit and SD Bank	Problems from the bank using the payment to cover other debts (Gas Cooker)
Total			15,630,000	11,400,000	14,900,000	366				
4	Northern Darfur	2001	3,000,000	2,200,000	1,970,000	60	1,773,000	90%	Agriculture Bank	
5	West Darfur	2001	2,210,000	2,200,000	7,200,000	202	7,200,000	100%	Agriculture Bank	
6	Great Bahar Al Gazal	2001	2,210,000	3,200,000	3,700,000	32	3,182,000	86%	Agriculture Bank	
7	White Nile	2001	2,210,000	2,200,000	640,000	42	-	0	Credit and SD Bank	Problems from the C&SB- from SWGU lack of staff
Total			9,630,000	9,800,000	13,510,000	366				
8	Gadarif	2002	4,210,000	2,200,000	3,700,000	46	3,330,000	90%	Credit and SD Bank	
9	Khartoum	2002	5,000,000	8,200,000	7,200,000	78	-	-	Credit and SD B.& Agri. B.	Marketing Centre
Total			9,210,000	10,400,00	10,900,00	124				
10	Southern Darfur	2003	3,500,000	3,500,000	3,500,000	70	-	-	Agriculture Bank	Project stopped due
Total			3,500,000	3,500,000	3,500,000	70				
Grand Total			37,970,000	35,100,000	42,810,000	866	28,977,000	67.70%		

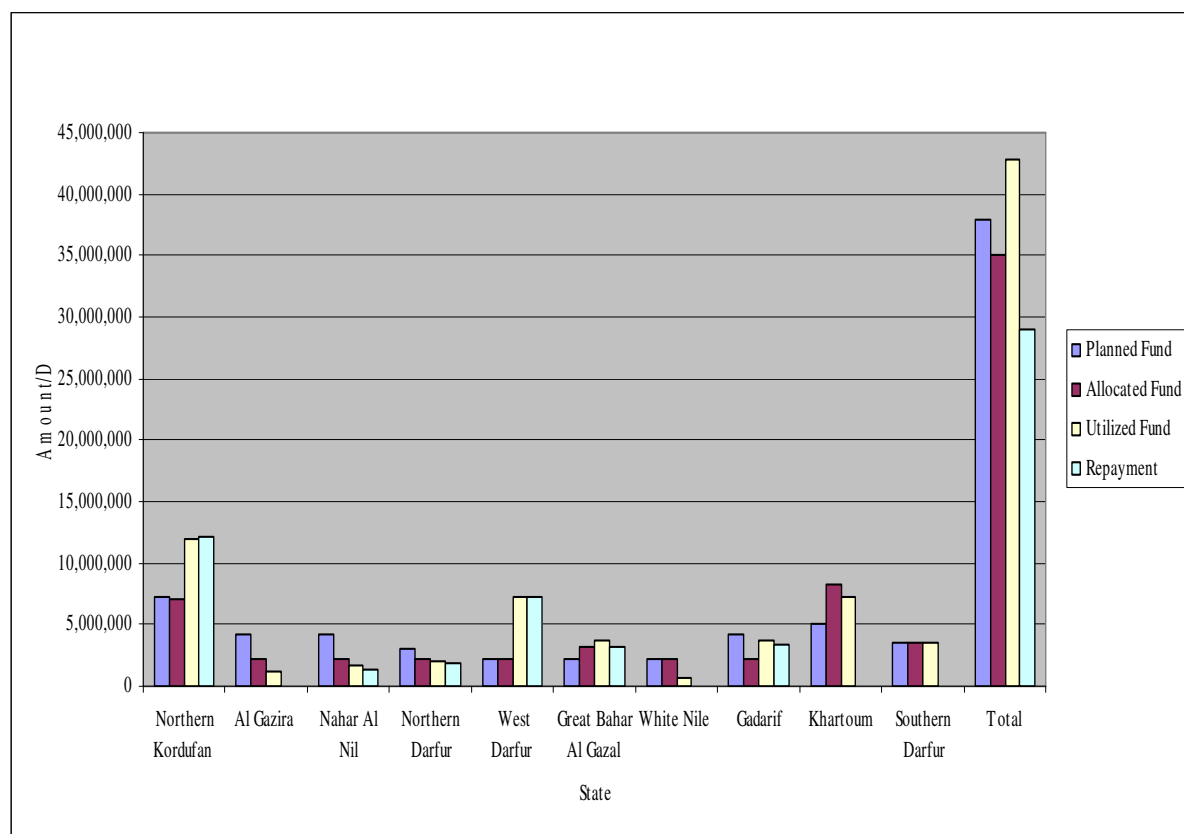
Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Report (SWGU 2004:3)

Table 7.14 above and Diagram 7:12 below indicate that although the allocated fund was less than the planned fund, during implementation processes the

There are risks and negative impacts recorded for the following states: At Al Gezira with 0% repayment in which all the credits funds were used for the establishment of the productive centre instead of using it as loans for poor women. The same could be said for Khartoum where most of the funds were used for the establishing the marketing centre. White Nile recorded 0% repayment because the funds were used for the establishment of the productive centre. Southern Darfur projects stopped due to war and conflict. See also Diagram 7.12below.

Diagram 7.12

Performance of SWGU Female Savings and Microcredit Projects, 2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Report (SWGU 2004:3)

Table 7.15 and Diagram 7.13 below indicate that there is a difference between funds utilized and funds allocated which is estimated to be 7,510,000 SD, equal to 21.96% of the allocated fund. This indicates very good performance within four years. By state, Northern Kordufan

shows the best performance followed by Al Gadarif, while Khartoum shows 0% of repayment.

Table 7.15

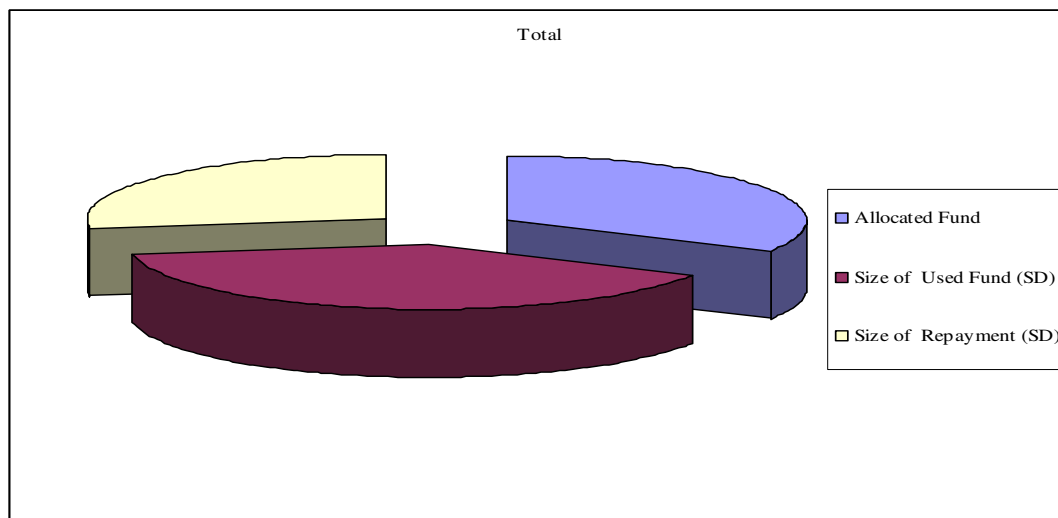
Performance of the Female Savings and Microcredit
Projects for the Nine States, 2004

Name of the State	Allocated Fund (SD)	Size of Used Fund (SD)	Repayment (SD)
North Kordufan	7,000,000	12,000,000	12,200,000
Al Gezira	2,200,000	1,200,000	-
Nahar Al Nil	2,200,000	1,700,000	1,292,000
N. Darfur	2,200,000	1,970,000	1,773,000
W. Darfur	2,200,000	7,200,000	7,200,000
Great Bahar Al Gazal	3,200,000	3,700,000	3,182,000
White Nile	2,200,000	640,000	-
Gadarif	2,200,000	3,700,000	3,330,000
Khartoum	8,200,000	7,200,000	-
Southern Darfur	3,500,000	3,500,000	-
Total	35,100,000	42,810,000	28,977,000

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Report (SWGU 2004:4)

Diagram 7.13

Performance of the Female Savings and Microcredit Projects for the Nine States, 2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Report (SWGU 2004:4)

Table 7.16 and Diagram 7.14 Female Microcredit Groups Distributed by the State, 2000 - 2003 as shown below indicate that by the end of 2003 the SWGU managed to reach the target number of female entrepreneurs of 866 as planned. Northern Kordufan records the highest number of female entrepreneurs, 267, which is equal to 30.83 % of the target group. Northern Kordufan was followed by West Darfur reaching 202 female entrepreneurs, equal to 23.32% of the target group while Khartoum reached 78 female entrepreneurs, 9% of the total target group. The lowest state was Al Gezira which reached 25 female entrepreneurs, equal to 2.88% of the target group.

Table 7.16

Female Microcredit Groups Distributed by the
State, 2000 -2003

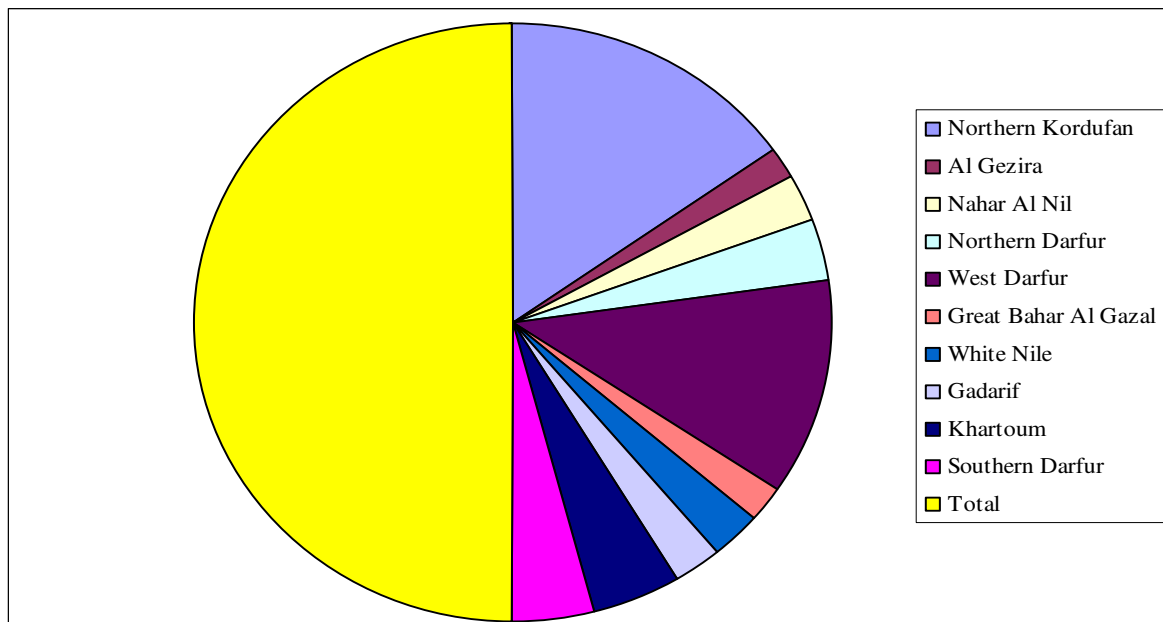
	Target Planned (2000-2004)	Target Reached (2000-2002)	Target Reached (2000-2004)	Remarks
Northern Kordufan	267	267	267	Implemented as Planned
Al Gezira	25	25	25	Implemented as Planned
Nahar Al Nil	44	44	44	Implemented as Planned
Northern Darfur	60	60	60	Implemented as Planned
West Darfur	202	202	202	Implemented as Planned
Great Bahar Al Gazal	32	32	32	Implemented as Planned
White Nile	42	42	42	Implemented as Planned
Gadarif	46	46	46	Implemented as Planned
Khartoum	78	78	78	Implemented as Planned
Southern Darfur	70	0	70	War and Conflict
Total	866	796	866	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Reports(SWGU 2000b:3)& (SWGU 2004:4)

Projects postponed due to conflicts and war

Diagram 7.14

Female Microcredit Groups Distributed by the State, 2000- 2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Reports(SWGU 2000b:3)& (SWGU2004:4)

Table 7.17

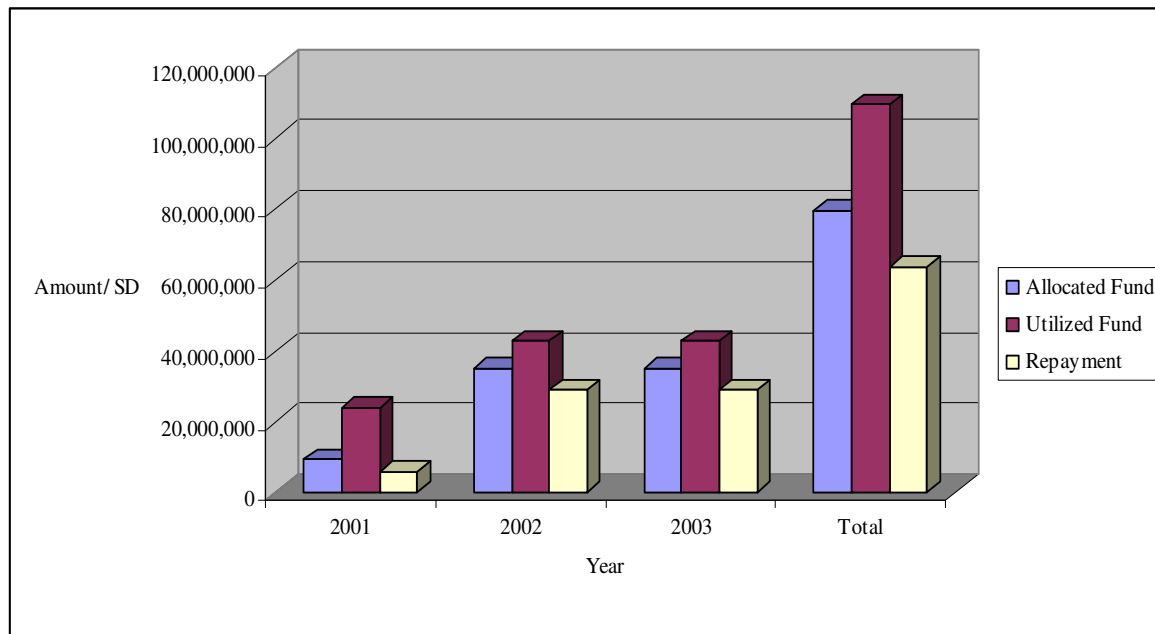
Performance of Female Savings and Microcredit Projects, 2001-2003

Year	Allocated Fund (SD)	Utilized Fund (SD)	Repayment (SD)	Percentage of Repayment
2001	9,300,000	23,833,910	5,794,724	24.30%
2002	35,100,000	42,810,000	28,977,000	67.70%
2003	35,100,000	42,810,000	28,977,000	67.70%
Total	79,500,000	109,453,910	63,748,742	53.20%

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Reports (SWG2001:3) and (SWG2004:4)

Diagram 7.15

Performance of Female Savings and Microcredit Projects
for the Nine States, 2001-2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Reports (SWGU2001:3) and (SWGU2004:4)

Table 7.17 and Diagram 7.15 Performance of Female Savings and Microcredit Projects for the Nine States, 2001-2003 showed above, indicate that there was progress in the ratio of the repayment of the loans by the female entrepreneurs. In 2001 the percentage of the repayment was 24.30% due to the constraints mentioned above in the implementation of the projects. However, in 2002 and 2003 the ratio of the repayment increased to reach 67.70% each year. On average the percentage of repayment was equal to 53.2%.

Table 7.18, Table 7.19 and Diagram 7.16 Female Microcredit Performance for North Kordufan and Khartoum States, 2001-2003 below indicate that our study areas showed poor performance in 2001. The repayment rate for North Kordufan, equal to 45%, increased to reach 85% for the years 2002 and 2003. Khartoum showed 0% in repayment; this was attributed to utilization of the fund in the construction of the Khartoum Marketing Centre.

Table 7.18

Female Microcredit Performance for
North Kordufan and Khartoum States, 2001-2003

State	Year	Planned Fund (SD)	Allocated Fund/ Approved Fund (SD)	Utilized Fund (SD)	Repayment (SD)	Percentage	Women
Northern Kordufan	2001	2,200,000	9,300,000	11,500,000	5,150,000	45%	210
Khartoum	2001	2,200,000	2,000,000	2,200,000	-		34
Northern Kordufan	2002	7,210,000	7,000,000	12,000,000	12,200,000	85%	
Khartoum	2002	5,000,000	8,200,000	7,200,000	-	-	
Northern Kordufan	2003	5,000,000	7,000,000	12,000,000	12,200,000	85%	267
Khartoum	2003	5,000,000	8,200,000	7,200,000		-	78
Total		26,610,100	41,700,000	52,100,000	29,550,000		

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Reports (SWGU 2001:3) and (SWGU 2004:4)

Table 7.19

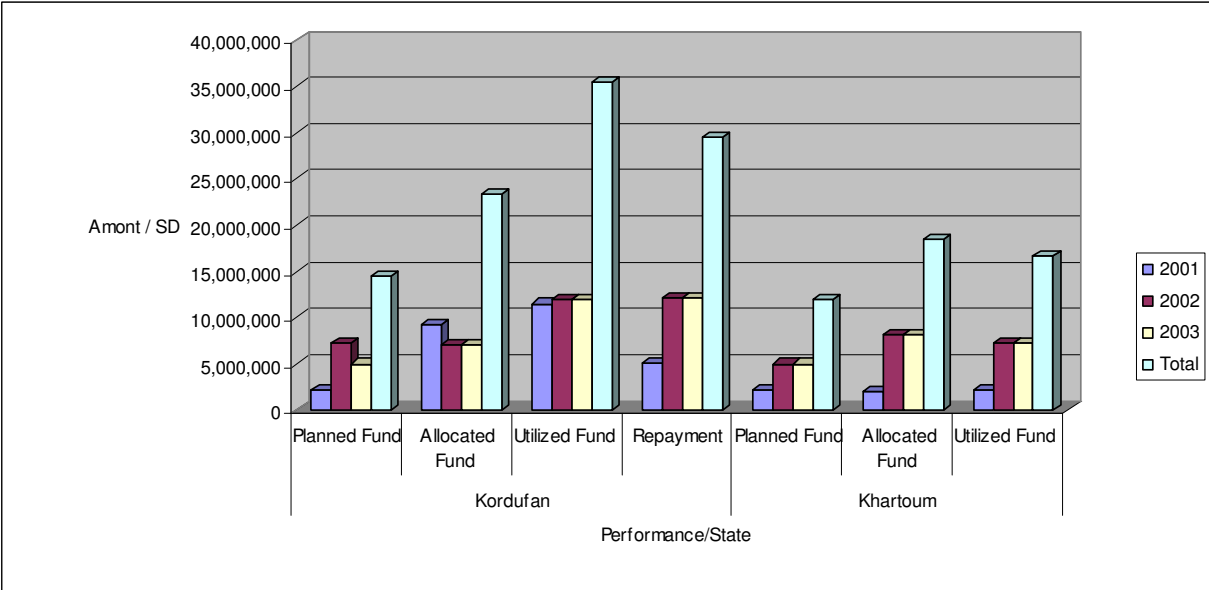
Female Microcredit Performance for
North Kordufan and Khartoum States, 2001-2003

Year	Kordufan				Khartoum			
	Planned Fund (SD)	Allocated Fund (SD)	Utilized Fund (SD)	Repayment (SD)	Planned Fund (SD)	Allocated Fund (SD)	Utilized Fund (SD)	Repayment
2001	2,200,000	9,300,000	11,500,000	5,150,000	2,200,000	2,000,000	2,200,000	-
2002	7,210,000	7,000,000	12,000,000	12,200,000	5,000,000	8,200,000	7,200,000	-
2003	5,000,000	7,000,000	12,000,000	12,200,000	5,000,000	8,200,000	7,200,000	-
Total	14,410,000	23,300,000	35,500,000	29,550,000	12,000,000	18,400,000	16,600,000	-

Source Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Reports (SWGU 2001:3) and (SWGU 2004:4)

Diagram 7.16

Female Microcredit Performance for
North Kordufan and Khartoum States, 2001-2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Reports (SWGU 2001:3) and (SWGU 2004:4)

Table 7.20 Performance of the SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects for the Year 2004

No	Name of the State	Funding Institutions		Total (SD)	Number of Women	Average Size of the Loan (SD)	Financial Administrative Responsibility
		C&SD Bank (SD)	SudaTel (SD)				
1	Northern Kordufan	5,000,000	2,210,000	7,210,000	267	27,000	C&SD Bank (Obied) and SWGU Branch
2	Al Gezira	2,000,000	2,210,000	4,210,000	25	168,000	C&SD Bank (Madani)& SWGU Branch
3	Nahar Al Nil	2,000,000	2,210,000	4,210,000	44	95,681	C&SD Bank (Atbara)& SWGU Branch
4	Northern Darfur	3,000,000	-	3,000,000	60	50,000	Agriculture Bank and SWGU Branch
5	West Darfur	-	2,210,000	2,210,000	202	10,940	Agriculture Bank(Al Jinana) and SWGU Branch
6	Great Bahar Al Gazal	-	2,210,000	2,210,000	32	69,062	Agriculture Bank (Waw)& SWGU Branch
7	White Nile	-	2,210,000	2,210,000	42	52,619	C&SD Bank (Kosti)& SWGU Branch
8	Gadarif	2,000,000	2,210,000	4,210,000	46	91,521	C&SD Bank (Gadarif)& SWGU Branch
9	Khartoum	5,000,000	-	5,000,000	150	66,666	C&SD Bank and SWGU Branch
10	A'Aly Alniel	-	2,210,000	2,210,000	40	55,250	Agriculture Bank((Malakal)) and SWGU Branch
11	Sinnar (Sinja)	3,000,000	-	3,000,000	75	80,000	C&SD Bank
12	Kassala	3,000,000	-	3,000,000	75	80,000	Agriculture Bank(Kassala) and SWGU Branch
13	Northern State	3,000,000	-	3,000,000	75	80,000	Agriculture Bank (Dongla)& SWGU Branch
14	Blue Nile	-	2,210,000	2,210,000	60	53,500	Agriculture Bank (Damazien)& SWGU Branch
15	Marketing Centre	3,000,000	-	3,000,000	60	50,000	Khartoum - Gard Hassan (repayments start2000)
	Total	31,000,000	19,890,000	50,890,000	1253		

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Annual Report (SWGU 2005:6)

New states

Table 7.20 shows that in 2004, states had been newly added for the implementation of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects including, North, Sinnar, Kassala, and Blue Nile instead of the Red Sea state as planned to benefit from SWGU savings and microcredit projects and as mentioned in Table 7.10 Plan Submitted to the Credit and Social Development Bank For Funding Female Microcredit and Savings Projects 2000 -2004.

Credit and Social Development Bank financed each state with 5,000,000 SD each. Expansion was funded in Khartoum State, including Omdurman, Khartoum and Khartoum North with 15,000,000 SD from the Khartoum State Ministry of Finance. When comparing these records of performance with the financial plan in Table 7. 10: Plan Submitted to the Credit and Social Development Bank, 2000 -2004, it is clear that fund for female savings and microcredit projects approved for the Red Sea state were used for Blue Nile state and the implementation of the projects at Red Sea state was delayed because the state was not ready to start the projects.

In 2004 there was an increase in the funds utilized and the number of female entrepreneurs as indicated in Table 7.20 above. The contribution of the SudaTel was equal to 19,800,000 SD while the Credit and Social Development Bank's contribution was equal to 31,000,000 SD. The allocated funds utilized by women increased by 44.98% from 35,100,000 SD in 2003 to reach 50,890,000 SD by 2004, which is an increase equal to 15,790,000 SD. The number of women increased within one year from 866 to reach 1,253 female entrepreneurs, an increase equal to 387 women or 44.68%.

. . . Planned contribution of the financial institution to the southern states

Since only one state of the southern Sudan was being included in the savings and microcredit projects since 2000, the rest of the states do not get their opportunity to benefit from this experience. It was found fair to include the six states of Southern Sudan in these projects. These states are Western Equatorial, Bahar Al Jabal, Eastern Equatorial, Jungli, Upper Nile and Buhiarat. As illustrated in Table 7.21 and Diagram 7.17 below, each state got funds equal to 5 million SD and the total was equal to 30,000,000 SD for 600 female entrepreneurs. These women were a fairly selected 100 female entrepreneurs from each state to participate in the projects and each female entrepreneur received a loan equal to 50,000 SD.

Table 7.21

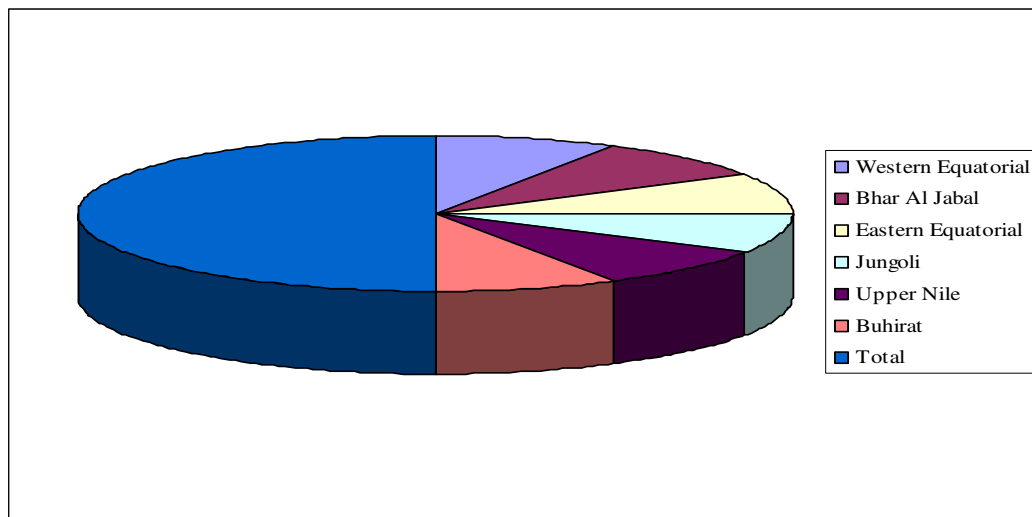
Expansion of the Savings and Microcredit Projects
at Southern States, 2005

State	Planned Fund/ SD	Number of Women	Size of Loan/ SD
Western Equatorial	5,000,000	100	50,000
Bahar Al Jabal	5,000,000	100	50,000
Eastern Equatorial	5,000,000	100	50,000
Jungli	5,000,000	100	50,000
Upper Nile	5,000,000	100	50,000
Buhiarat	5,000,000	100	50,000
Total	30,000,000	600	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2005:6)

Diagram 7.17

Expansion of the Female Savings and
Microcredit Projects in the Southern States, 2004-2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2005:6)

. . . Contribution of the financial institutions to the production centres

Under the umbrella of the Social Mobilization and Solidarity for Family Productive Programme, the SWGU is responsible from the implementation of six Social Development and Production Centres. Two of these are Kazagil Milk Production Centre at North Kordufan

and Khalawi Female Production Centre at Omdurman. Funds are implemented by the SWGU savings and microcredit projects and supplied by the Zakat Social Development Fund, Ministry of Welfare and Social Development.

Table 5.3 Zakat Social Solidarity Fund for Development-Financial Support of Orphans and Poor Productive Families, 1995-1999 indicates that, in 1999, Zakat Fund allocated 163,200,000 SD to reach poor families, but actually reached only 14,280 poor productive families as shown in Table 5.3 Number of Orphans and Poor Productive Families Reached by Zakat Fund 1995-1999.

Thus, in 1999 Zakat Fund spent only 163,200,000 SD to reach 14,280 families, distributing 11428.57 SD per family. This fund would be used as revolving loan fund for establishing female microcredit projects channelled through the Credit and Social Development Bank but following the policy of the Zakat Social Development Fund using the Islamic mode of Gard Hassan. The female entrepreneurs use the loan and repay the same amount of the loan without paying interest. Then this loan will be used by other female entrepreneurs to reach as many as poor productive families as possible. However, for the sustainability of these centres, the female entrepreneurs groups who joined them were asked to contribute by paying any sum of money they could for maintenance and to promote the good values of collaborative and communal work among women. Tea sellers and the Khalawi women are included in these target groups who benefited from Gard Hassan.

The SWGU got funds for the project of poverty reduction and revolving loans for Khalawi and Milk Production Centre female entrepreneurs in Sudan as shall be shown in the table below. Until 2003, Khalawi RLF projects were implemented at six states as follows:

1. Khartoum state: Four projects were implemented two at Omdurman (Western Nile Bank) and Al Fitahab for the Mshiekhat for southern internally displaced women. And other two projects at Al Haj Yousif and Maigoma Sharag (Eastern Nile Bank).
2. Southern Kordufan as a rehabilitation agriculture projects (Jabarik Plantation).
3. Southern Darfur
4. White Nile
5. Northern Bahar Al Gazal
6. Western Kordufan: Oil processing project.

Table 7.22

Poverty Reduction Revolving Loan Fund for Khalawi Women 2001-2003
(Funds channelled through the Credit and Social Development Bank as Gard Hassan)

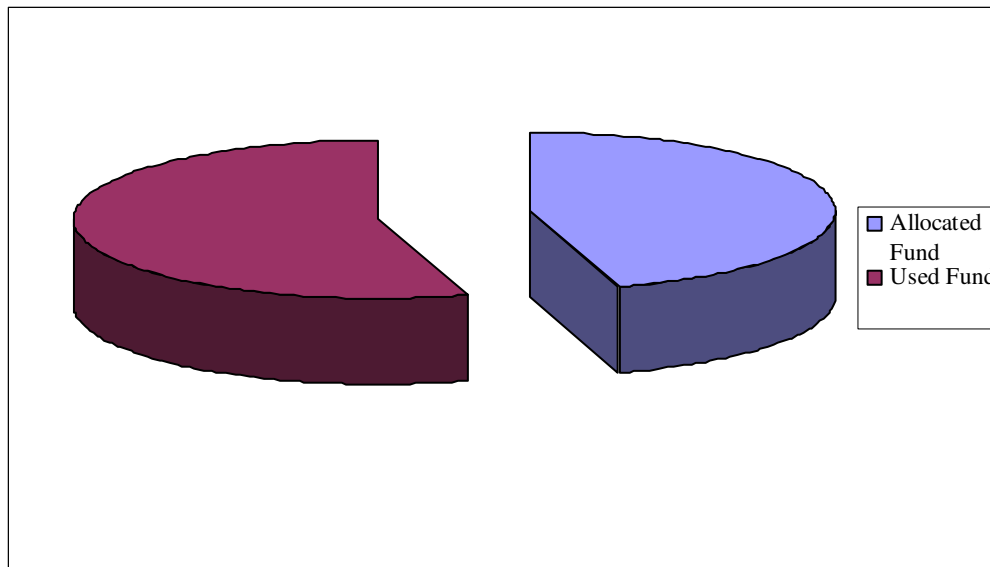
No	Name of the State	Starting Date	Allocated Fund	Repayment of Loans	No. of women	Implementing Bank	% of repayment	Observation
1	Khartoum (Eastern Nile)							AL Haj Yousif and Almaygoma Sharg.
2	Western Kordufan	2003			264			Oil Production Group
3	Khartoum (Omdurman)							Internally displaced Southern Women
4	Khartoum (Eastern Nile)							Oum Drehwa (Cow raising)
5	Southern Kordufan	2001			280 with 801 family dependents			Rehabilitation (displaced families)- Agriculture (total size of the land distributed at 9 different areas) Fadan (Fadan 1000 metre)
6	Khartoum	2002	82,000,000	72,000,000	78	Agriculture and C and S D Bank	80%	Khartoum Omdurman
7	Northern Bahar Al Gazal (Waw)	2001	32,000,000	37,000,000	32	C and S D Bank	70%	
8	White Nile	2001	22,000,000	6,000,000	42	C and S D Bank	0%	Problems in implementation from the bank side
9	Southern Darfur (Nialha)	2003	35,000,000	35,000,000	70	Agriculture Bank	90%	
	Total		351,000,000	427,700,000	766			
	Average						62.10%	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2004:8)

Fadan 1000meter

Diagram 7.18

Poverty Reduction Revolving Loan Fund for Khalawi Women, 2001-2003
(Fund channelled through the Credit and Social Development Bank as Gard Hassan)



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2004:8)

Table 7.22 and Diagram 7.18 illustrate the Poverty Reduction Revolving Loan Fund for Khalawi female entrepreneurs for the years 2001-2003 that had been channelled through the Credit and Social Development Bank as Gard Hassan. Six states were targeted during the period 2001-2003; these are Western Kordufan, Khartoum, Southern Kordufan, Northern Bahr Al Gazal (Waw), White Nile and Southern Darfur (Nialha). Funds allocated were equal to 351,000,000 SD and the repayment of loan was estimated to be 427,700,000 SD. Social Development Bank was responsible for the fund administration in five states. Due to a lack of Social Development Bank facilities in Southern Darfur, the bank delegated the responsibility to the Agriculture Bank of Southern Darfur (Nialha). Social Development Bank similarly delegated responsibilities in some towns in Khartoum- Omdurman.

When Khartoum-Omdurman Khalawi microcredit projects started in 2002 the allocated fund was equal to 82,000,000 SD and the repayment of the loan was estimated to be equal to 72,000,000 SD, with high percentage of repayment estimated at 80%. 78 female entrepreneurs started the project and received the fund through the Agriculture and Credit and Social Development Banks. This indicates that credit through Zakat Social Fund at Khartoum recorded a higher percentage of repayment than SudatTel credit in the first two years of implementation as Zakat Social fund loan is a Gard Hassan without interest.

There were some constraints encountered, like the White Nile state where all the funds were used for the Centre establishment and equipment. However, the average repayment was 62.10%, indicating good performance. The budget allocated included establishment of 6 Social Development and Production Centres at a cost equal to 260,000,000 SD, capacity building of 60 Khalawi Shikha (Khalawi teachers) as well as poverty reduction loans.

Target groups also included displaced families. Agriculture Project distributed land at 9 different areas equal to 920 Fadan, or 1,000 meters per fadan. The table below illustrates the target groups reached by the revolving loan fund projects. Table 7.23 and Diagram 7.19 Female Entrepreneurs Reached by Zakat Social Development Fund showed below indicate that there were increasing numbers of female entrepreneurs who joined Zakat Social Development Fund. This number increased from 78 in 2001, 10.1% of the target group, to 354 in 2002, 46.2% of the target group, to 334 in 2003, 43.6% of the target group. Tea Sellers joined the fund as the direction of the Zakat Social Development Fund was directed to the informal sector.

Table 7.23

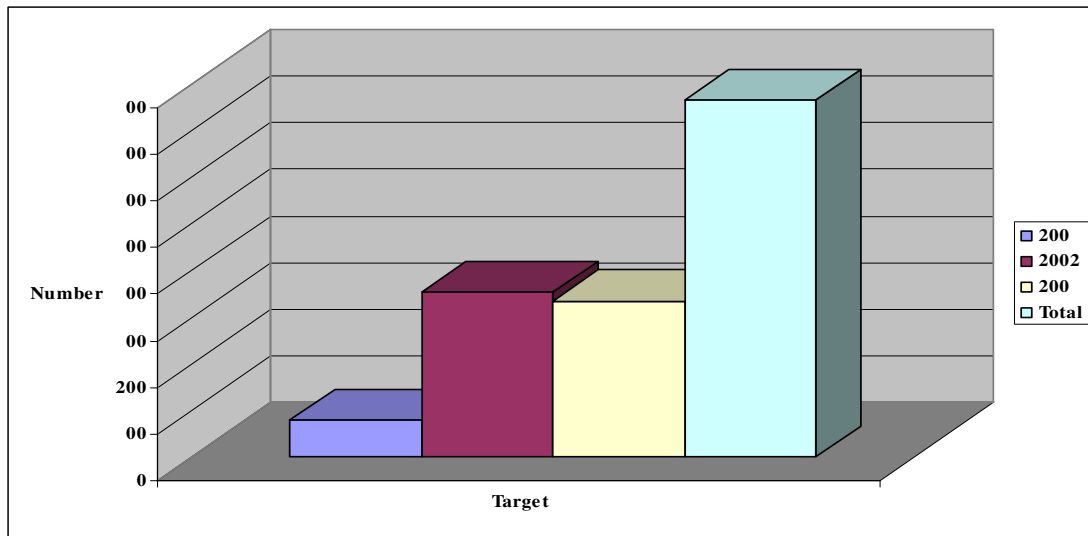
Female Entrepreneurs Reached by Zakat
Social Development Fund

Year	Target
2001	78
2002	354
2003	334
Total	766

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006
compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2004:9)

Diagram 7.19

Female Entrepreneurs Reached by
Zakat Social Development Fund 2001-2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2004:9)

The following Table 7.24 and Diagram 7.20 are compiled from the records of Table 7.22: Poverty Reduction Revolving Loan Fund for Khalawi Women, 2001-2003; Table 7.21 Expansion of the Savings and Microcredit Projects at Southern States, 2005; Table 7.20 Performance of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects, 2004 and Table 7.10 Plan Submitted to the Credit and Social Development Bank For Funding female savings and microcredit projects, 2000 -2004.

Table 7.24

Fund Allocated for Female Microcredit Projects,
Up to 2005

	Allocated Fund (SD)	Used Fund (SD)	Target
RLF-Zakat Fund	354,880,000	427,700,000	766
SudaTel Microcredit	101,400,000	42,810,000	1853
Total	456,280,000	470,510,000	2619

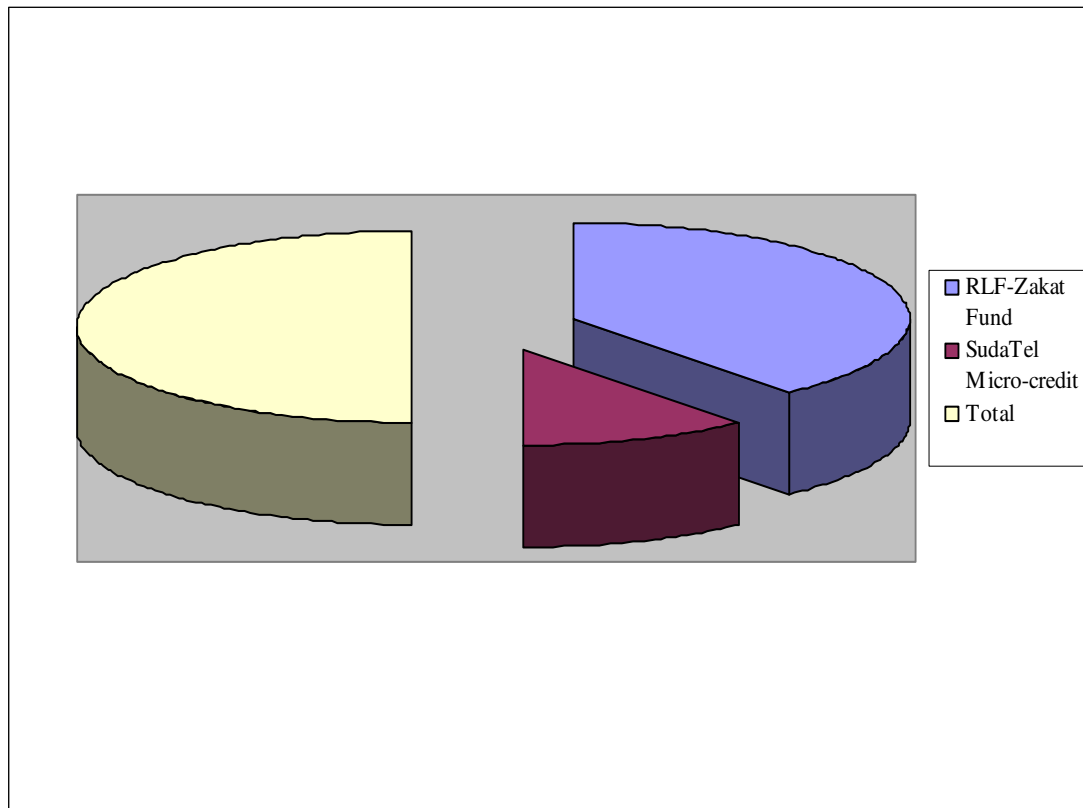
Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports

(SWGU2004:80), (SWGU2005:3&6) and (SWGU 2006:2)

performance of 9 states only up to 2003. Performance of 10 states were not included
(4 new states in the North and 6 new states in South started in 2004 and 2005)

Diagram 7.20

Fund Allocated for Female Microcredit Projects Up to 2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWG2004:80), (SWG2005:3&6) and (SWG2006:2)

Table 7.24 and Diagram 7.20 above indicate that the total budget allocated for the SWGU to implement the poverty reduction and savings and microcredit projects and empower female entrepreneurs economically reached 446,380,000 SD until 2005. The SudaTel contribution reached 101,400,000 SD distributed to 1853 female entrepreneurs. Zakat revolving loan fund reached 354,880,000 SD and reached 766 female entrepreneurs. There was also a huge fund allocated by Zakat Development Fund for the establishment of Social Development and Production Centres. According to the SWGU Reports, 2000, Zakat Development Fund (MOWSD) allocated 500,000,000 SD for Al Bait Al Sudani (Sudan house) as women's Social Development and Production Centre for marketing all production coming from all female entrepreneurs in the different states of Sudan. Also a huge fund was allocated for capacity building of female entrepreneurs and staff as we shall see later on in this chapter.

Table 7.25

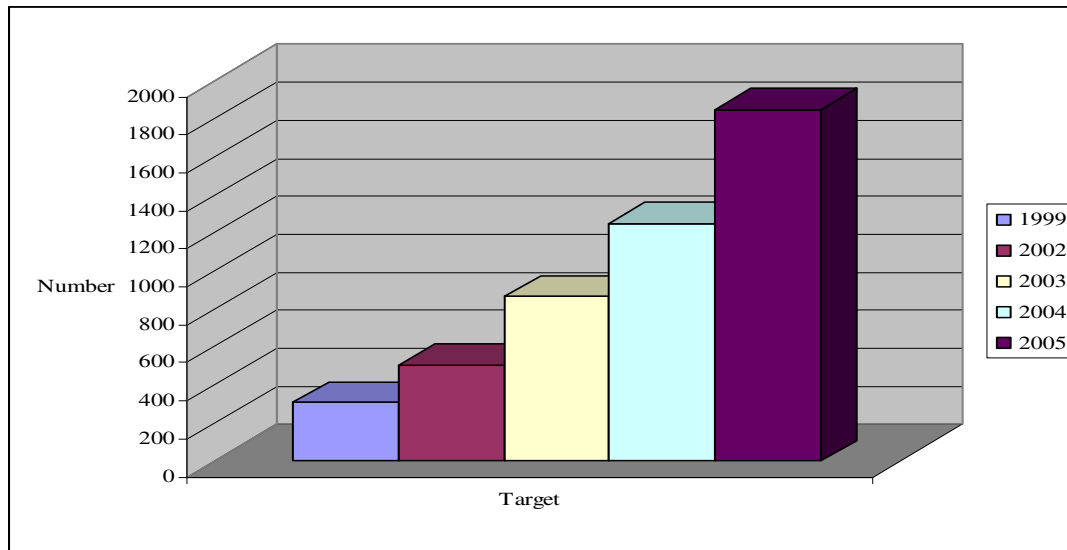
Female Entrepreneurs Reached by SudaTel
Microcredit Projects, 1999-2005

Year	Target
1999	308
2002	506
2003	866
2004	1253
2005	1853

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWG2004:80), (SWG2005:3&6) and (SWG2006:2)

Diagram 7.21

Female Entrepreneurs Reached by SudaTel
Microcredit Projects, 1999-2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWG2004:80), (SWG2005:3&6) and (SWG2006:2)

The impact of the SWGU concerning SudaTel Credit can be traced back to Table 6.2: Plan for the Distribution of SudaTel credit, first batch. Chapter 6 indicates that SudaTel allocated 103,199,997 SD to reach 2,669 female entrepreneurs to be implemented by 10 local organizations. The SWGU allocated 19,989,719 SD to reach 308 female entrepreneurs. The 1999 SudaTel plan became a reality when the SWGU managed to utilize almost 101,400,000 SD, 98.25% the SudaTel allocated fund for ten NGOs and reached 1,853 or 69.42% of the female entrepreneurs targeted by SudaTel for this microcredit project due to more fund

mobilisation and coordination with other organisation and institutions. The records in Table 7.26 below conclude that the budget allocated by SudaTel to reach the target group of 2,669 female entrepreneurs was not sufficient. It reached only 69.42% of the total female entrepreneurs, thus more funds are needed in the future to reach this target group. However, the great impact and contribution of the SWGU in the utilization of the whole fund allocated by SudaTel for the implementation of the savings and microcredit projects has been indicated in Table 7.26 and Diagrams 7.22 and 7.23 below:

Table 7.26

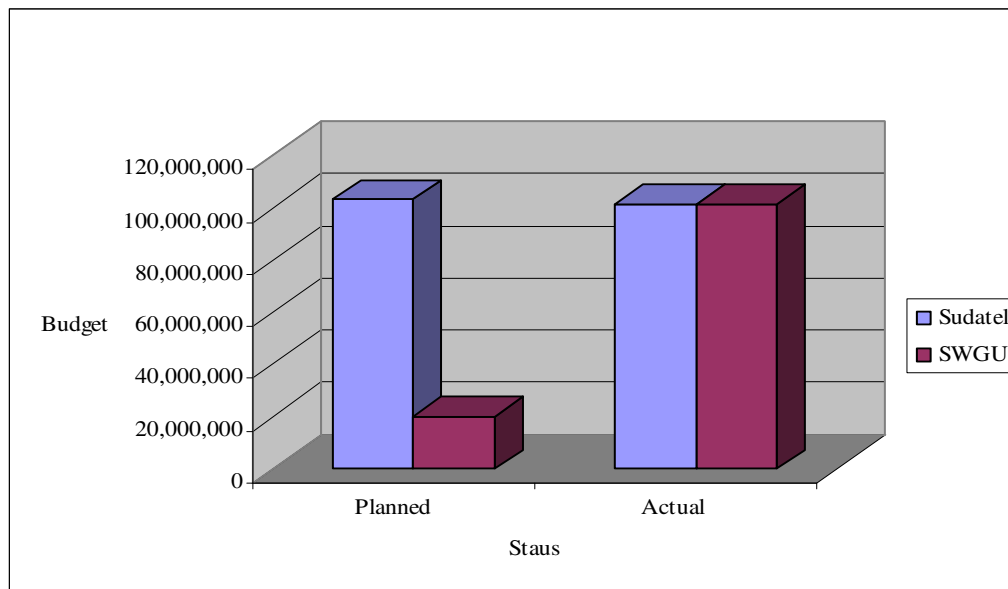
Contribution of the SWGU in the Implementation of the SudaTel
Savings and Microcredit Projects, 1999-2005

Institution	Planned 1999 (SD)	Actual 2005 (SD)
SudaTel	103,199,997	101,400,000
SWGU	19,989,719	101,400,000

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWG2004:80), (SWG2005:3&6) and (SWG 2006:2)

Diagram 7.22

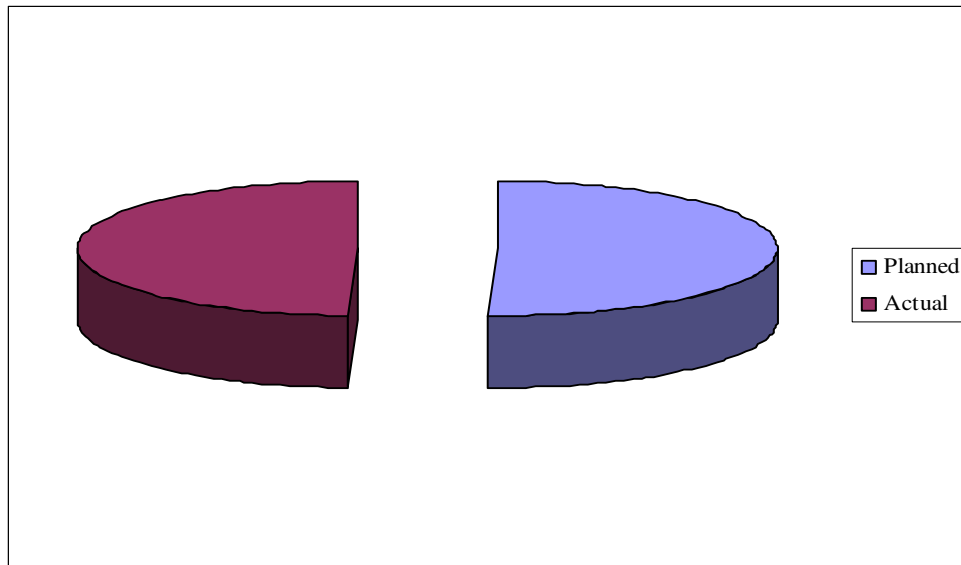
Contribution of the SWGU in the Implementation of the SudaTel
Savings and Microcredit projects, 1999-2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWG2004:80), (SWG2005:3&6) and (SWG 2006:2)

Diagram 7.23

Performance of the of the SudaTel Savings and Microcredit Projects
Projects, 1999-2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWG2004:80), (SWG2005:3&6) and (SWG2006:2)

The great impact of the SWGU in reaching the target group of poor productive families through the savings and microcredit projects this can be analysed from the data collected from the SWGU 2006 report as shown in the following Table 7.27 and Diagram 7.23 which indicate that the SWGU would be able managed to reach 7.19% of the target group including female entrepreneurs from the Southern States of the productive families set up as target group.

Table 7.27

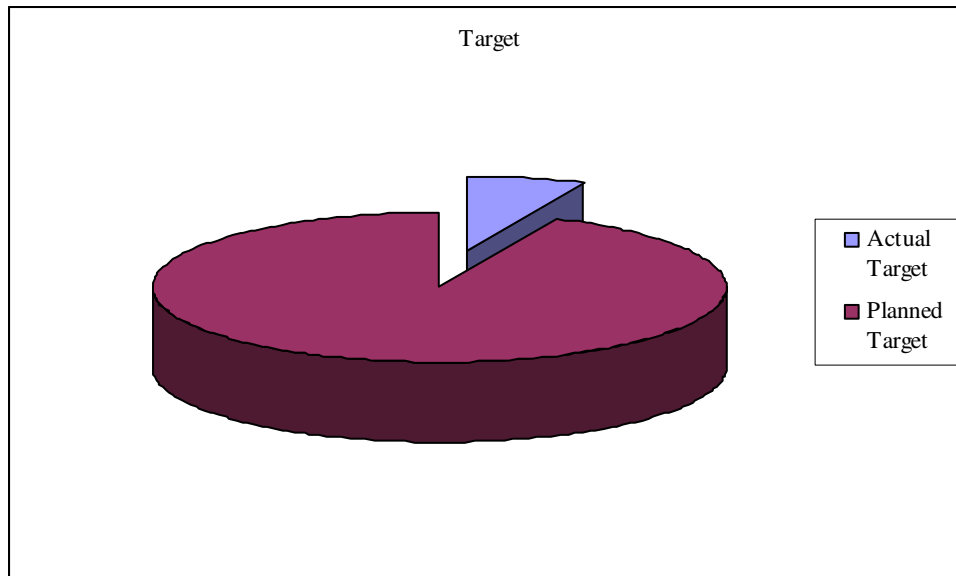
Contribution of the SWGU to Reach the Target Group
of the Productive Families of the Poverty
Reduction Strategy

Target	Number
Actual Target	2,619
Planned Target	36,419

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad and Khalafallah 2001: 12) & (SWG2006)

Diagram 7.24

Contribution of the SWGU to Reach the Target Group of the Productive Families of the Poverty Reduction Strategy



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from (Al Awad and Khalafallah 2001: 12) and (SWG:2006)

The impact of the SWGU can be also analyzed in the contribution of the SWGU revolving loan fund projects under the umbrella of the National Poverty Reduction Strategy and part of the Social Mobilization for Solidarity and Family Production Programme discussed in Chapter five. This can be seen from the establishment of the six Social Development and Production Centres as illustrated in Table 7.22 Poverty Reduction Revolving Loan Fund for Khalawi Women, 2001-2003. The revolving loan fund provision for the female entrepreneurs joining the projects including our sample groups both in Northern Kordufan state, Kazagil Milk production centre, production unit and Khalawi women at Khartoum state, Omdurman Social Development and Production Centres, Khalawi unit. The following section will be devoted to deep analysis of the Northern Kordufan Kazagil Milk production centre group loan based on the SWGU records.

Table 7.28

Poverty Reduction and Revolving Loan Fund for Women's Production Centre, Northern Kordufan, 2000-2003

Location	Kind of Production	Cost (SD)	Mode of Payment	No. of Women	Size of Loan
Northern Kordufan - Kazagil Locality	Milk Production (Cheese, Butter/ Samin and Yogurt) and sheep fattening	600,000	monthly	10	250,000
Northern Kordufan - Al Rahad Locality	Milk Production (sheep raising)	880,000	monthly	10	250,000
Northern Kordufan -Um Rwabah Province	Sesame Oil Production	700,000	monthly	10	250,000
Northern Kordufan - Shikan Province	Vegetable growing	300,000	monthly	15	300,000
Northern Kordufan - Sodari Province	Vegetable growing	300,000	monthly	10	300,000
Northern Kordufan – Barah	Vegetable growing	300,000	monthly	10	300,000
Northern Kordufan- Shikan	Restaurant	300,000	monthly	15	300,000
Northern Kordufan – Shikan	Crop Marketing	500,000	monthly	10	500,000
Northern Kordufan (Under study)	Poultry		monthly		
Northern Kordufan (Under study)	Carpet Making		monthly		
Total		3, 880,000		90	2,450,000

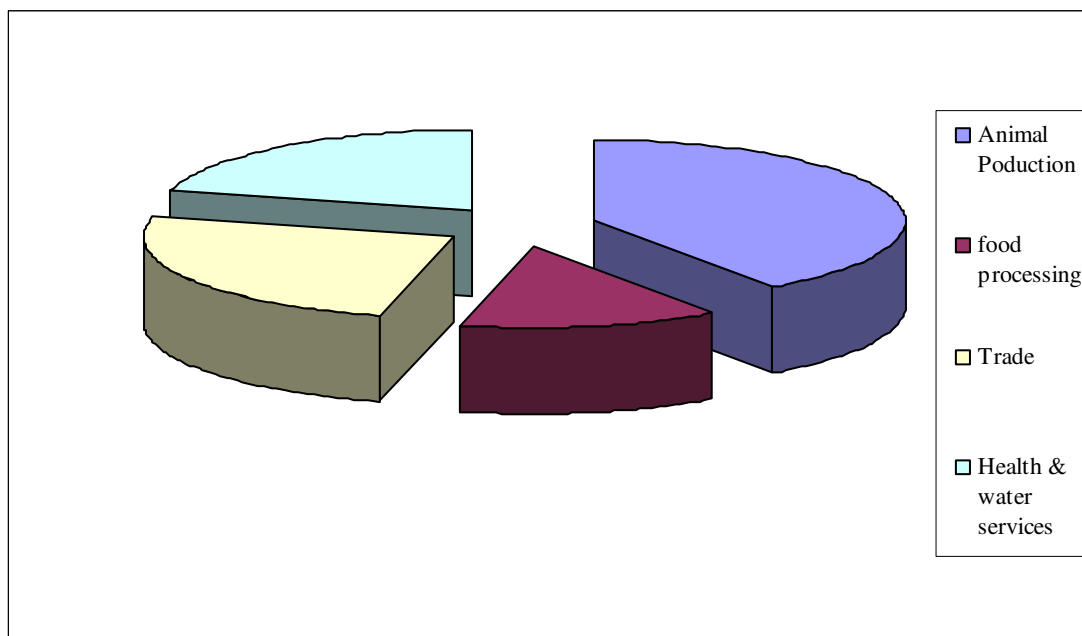
Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU2003:10)

Table 7.28 above indicates that Northern Kordufan female entrepreneurs have been in a very good position being awarded a revolving loan fund to set up their production centres and establish their microcredit projects in groups. 9 production units are located at Northern Kordufan with a total cost of 3,880,000 SD benefiting 90 female entrepreneurs. The sector of production is related to agriculture, animal production and services. The size of the loan for each groups ranges between 250,000 SD to 500,000 SD for each group and for each female entrepreneur the loan size is 20,000-50,000 SD (87- 217 US). The total loan size is equal to 2,450,000 SD.

In addition to the group female microcredit projects that have been discussed above, there are also other individual economic enterprises for female entrepreneurs as shown below in Diagram 7.25 and Table 7.29.

Diagram 7.25

Poverty Revolving Loan Fund for Women's Production Centre, Northern Kordufan State, 2000-2003



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU2003:11)

Table 7.29

Revolving Loan Fund for Individual Economic Enterprises,
Northern Kordufan State, 2003

No	Name of the project	Cost/ SD	No. Beneficiary	Sector
1	Milk Production	88,000	1	Animal production
2	Sheep Fattening	75,000	1	Animal production
3	Sheep Raising	60,000	1	Animal production
4	Leather industries	100,000	1	Animal production
5	Milk Production	60,000	1	Animal production
Total		383,000	5	
1	Sweet Production	50,000	1	Food processing
2	Kissra making	20,000	1	Food processing
3	Pastry making	25,000	1	Food processing
4	Food and Drink selling	35,000	1	Food processing
Total		130,000	4	
1	Small Trading	50,000	1	Trade
2	Charcoal and wood selling	30,000	1	Trade
3	Spices mill	130,000	1	Trade
4	Sewing material	30,000	1	Trade
Total		240,000	4	
1	Laboratory equipment	100,000	1	Health services
2	Midwifery equipment	50,000	1	Health services
3	Donkey Draft	50,000	1	Water services
Total		200,000	3	
Sum		953,000	16	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Reports (SWGU2003:11)

Individual Loan Size 20,000- 130,000 SD 87- 565 US

Diagram 7.25 and Table 7.29 show that the individual female microcredit enterprises consisted of 16 individual female microcredit projects which reflect four major sectors related to poverty in Northern Kordufan state, mainly food insecurity, lack of services, especially health and water services, lack of job opportunities and increasing female unemployment in

the informal sectors. These microcredit projects have links to the poverty reduction strategy as well as having an impact at the household and individual levels as we shall see in chapter 8.

For Kazagil Milk Production Centre, our sample started with ten women and within one year the total of the female entrepreneurs was doubled twice. Objectives of the Milk Production Centre include:

1. Strengthening the female entrepreneurs' technical capacity in production of milk, cheese, samini and dried yogurt.
2. Benefiting from raw materials/milk which is available during autumn/rainy season in huge quantities.
3. Improving milk production using women's potential abilities.
4. Increasing women's income to improve household living conditions.
5. Finding new channels of marketing and advocating for women's products in the states and other regions. Al bait Al Sudani (Sudanese House women marketing centre) in Khartoum assists in exposing and marketing women's milk production (especially cheese) with high prices to traders and middlemen who benefit from women's production.
6. Promoting women's collaborative work and encouraging them to benefit from the centre facilities.

The budget breakdown for the Milk Production Centre is indicated in Table 7.30 and Diagram 7. 26 below:

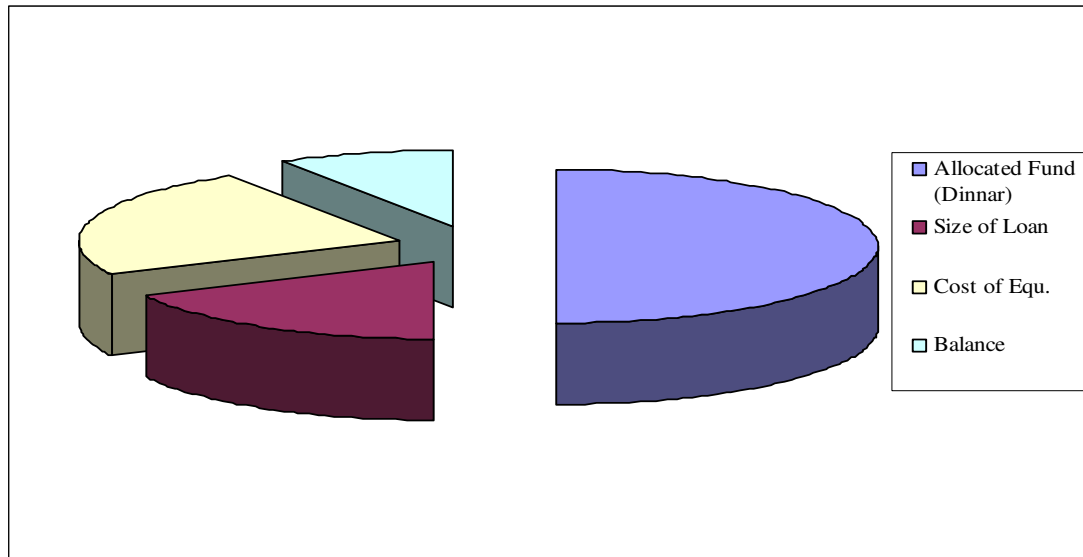
Table 7.30: Budget Allocation for Milk Production Centre,
Northern Kordufan, Kazagil

Activity	Allocated Fund (SD)	Size of Loan (SD)	Cost of Equipment (SD)	Balance (SD)	Number of entrepreneurs
Milk Production	700,000	250,000	324,500	125,500	10

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU2003:12)

Diagram 7. 26

Budget Allocation for Milk Production Centre,
Northern Kordufan, Kazagil



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU2003:12)

The loan consists of two kinds. One is in cash for each female entrepreneur for daily processing and selling of products. Repayment will be monthly; also part of the loan is in kind for provision of equipment provided by the bank for milk production. After the repayment of the cost of the equipment all the production equipment will be the female entrepreneur's assets. The cost of assets or production equipment was estimated to be 324,500 SD for each production centre.

According to the female entrepreneurs, the rationales behind the selection of the economic activity are the following:

- Availability of input and other required raw material for milk production,
- Increasing number of female entrepreneurs who live in poverty,
- Capacity for milk production exists,
- Centre provides the female entrepreneurs with the advanced technology of milk production and equipment and assists in getting compatible marketing production for cheese and dry yogurt.
- Introduction of dry yogurt from milk is a new milk product

Criteria for the selection of the projects for funding as stated by the Credit and Social Development Bank:

- Project should be one of the economic activities practiced by female entrepreneurs in the area and the purpose of the loan is to expand and develop these economic activities.
- The loan should be quick in its rotation so it can be used with another group.
- Beneficiaries of the project are female entrepreneurs.
- Priority will be for group loans.
- Project should be economically feasible

In 2003 the female entrepreneurs started their production and marketing cheese at their local areas and through the SWGU at Khartoum Marketing Centre, Al Bait Al Sudani.

. .2 Functioning of the financial institutions policies at the grassroots level

. .2. Formal institutions

Under the umbrella of the National Comprehensive Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Social Mobilization for Solidarity, the SWGU has been mandated to implement the savings and microcredit projects. The SWGU receives its budget from Zakat Fund, SudaTel and through coordination with Credit and Social Development Bank and Agriculture Bank to implement the female savings and microcredit projects as a tool to alleviate poverty. As the intention of this study is to investigate the impact of the SWGU female savings and microcredit projects on poverty alleviation at the household level and women's empowerment in two states, Khartoum and Northern Kordufan, the following section will shed light on the female entrepreneurs' interaction with the financial institutions and judge if they were empowered.

. 2.2 Banks support in funding female microcredit projects

Table 7.31

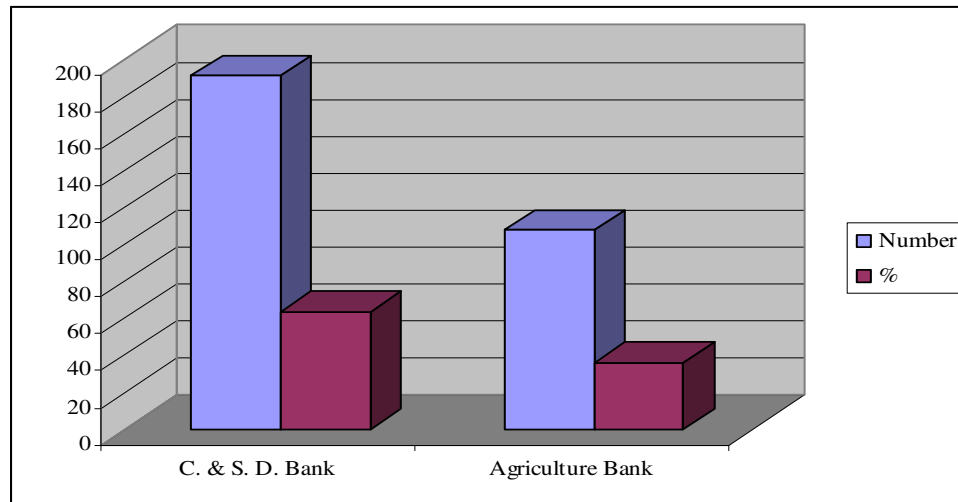
Banks' Support in Funding Female Entrepreneurs' Savings and Microcredit projects

Financing Bank	Number	%	Number of Loan	Kind of Loan
Credit and Social Development Bank	192	64	280	Individual
Agriculture Bank	108	36	1	Group
Total	300	100	281	

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.27

Banks' Support in Funding Female Entrepreneurs' Savings and Microcredit projects



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

From Table 7.31 and Diagram 7.27, it is clear that the Credit and Social Development Bank financed 64% of the total cost of these savings and microcredit projects. In fact the savings and microcredit projects were originally financed by the Credit and Social Development Bank which specialised in this area of social development. In local areas where the Credit and

Social Development Bank facilities are not available, the SWGU managed to create a link with Agriculture Bank. Agriculture Bank also works in socio-economic development to facilitate the disbursement of its budget to finance the female microcredit projects and utilised its total fund for the projects. These two banks have succeeded in reaching female beneficiaries in all the states of Sudan. This indicates that financial institutions and banks play an important role in socio-economic development and eradication of poverty. If the opportunities are created, accessible financing institutions can work directly with these peripheral and weak categories of women. Government should financially support these financial institutions and banks to strengthen women and thus their contribution to development.

. .2. Kinds of loans

Table 7.32

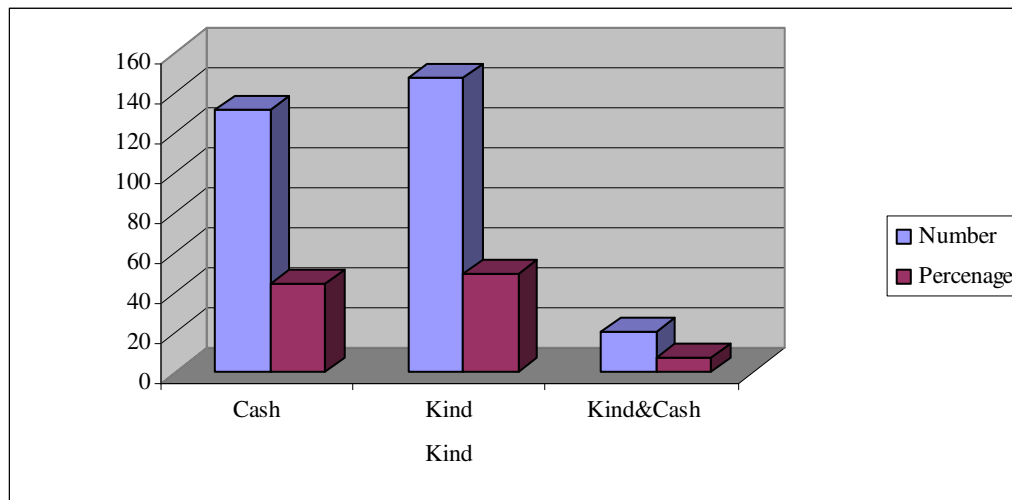
Kinds of Loans Adopted by Female Entrepreneurs

Kind of Loan	Cash	Kind	Kind and Cash	Total
Number	132	148	20	300
Percentage	44	49.3	6.7	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.28

Kinds of Loans Adopted by Female Entrepreneurs



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

From Diagram 7.28 it is clear that the banks offer three kinds of loans services. One is the payment of the loan in cash, second is payment of the loan in kind and third is cash and kind loan. 49.3% of the loans adopted by female entrepreneurs were in kind. 100 of the female entrepreneurs in this group are the market oriented tea sellers who have the option to take the loan in kind. On the other hand, the study found out that Al Thowra, 28 female entrepreneurs, and Khalawi, 20 female entrepreneurs, do not have a choice about financing their projects. Since the bank is offering specific kinds of inputs to establish microcredit projects, they must take this opportunity and establish their microcredit projects. According to all the female entrepreneurs, it is easier to own the assets in kind than to get the loan in cash and start going to the market to buy the projects' assets. In this regard, home based Khalawi and Thowra female entrepreneurs mentioned that receiving the loan in kind rather than in cash reduces the chance and risk of being exploited by the traders, while market oriented tea sellers indicated that time is critical. Since they are spending the whole day in the market they do not have time to get the loan in cash and go for selling the equipment for tea making.

6.7 % of the female entrepreneurs preferred to get the loan in cash and kind. These are the market oriented female entrepreneurs of the production centre where the bank, with assistance of SWGU, purchased the inputs of production and also offered a loan in cash for buying the milk for processing. This sample is more experienced women in milk production and marketing. They have a partial choice to decide on financing their microcredit project.

The diagram indicates that 44% of the loans were made in cash to home based Khalawi and Thowra female entrepreneurs. These 60 Khalawi female entrepreneurs said that the bank ran out of the inputs of production so they got the loan in cash from the bank. 72 Al Thowra home based female entrepreneurs mentioned that they preferred to receive the loan in cash to establish their own microcredit projects than receiving inputs of microcredit projects identified by the bank. This process made the access and ownership of the inputs of production very easy for female entrepreneurs. Moreover, when female entrepreneurs got the loan in kind, the loan processes were easy. These loans were applied according to Islamic rules, which are free from Ribbah (illegal profit) because the women will pay back the same amount of the loan with a small amount of interest to cover administrative costs. The banks in all cases try to possess high quantities of inputs of production with lower prices and less

administrative cost to encourage the women to own the inputs of production without going to the market to buy the inputs with high prices.

. .2. Financial modes of the loan

Table 7.33

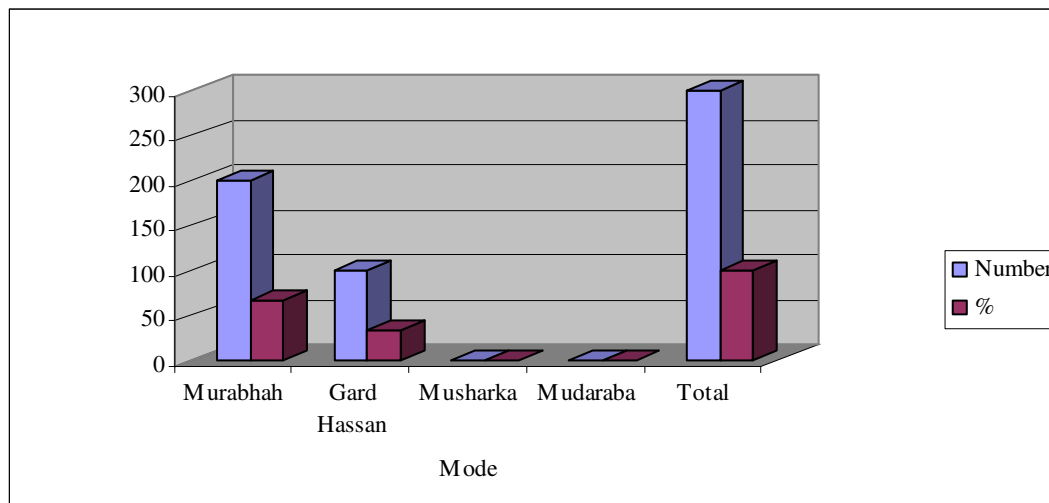
Financial Modes of the Loans Adopted by the Female Entrepreneurs

Forms of the Loan	Number	%
Murabaha	200	66.7
Gard Hassan	100	33.3
Musharaka	0	0
Mudharaba	0	0
Total	300	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.29

Financial Modes of the Loans Adopted by the Female Entrepreneurs



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

The study has found that Credit and Social Development and Agriculture Banks prefer Murabaha because it guarantees a given return on capital invested and the bank does not have to bother about the supervision and management of the female microcredit projects. In the bank's view, Murabaha is safe both for profit and for repayment. Murabaha margin for small

female producers in general ranges between 2 to 4 per cent per month, but in practice and as we shall see in this chapter the reality is different.

Whether the inputs of production are provided by the bank or not, as it is clear from Table 7.33 and Diagram 7.29, 66.7% of the women get the loan from the bank in the form of Murabaha loan, which is more suitable for such microcredit projects. Other formulas for financing microcredit projects like Musharaka /sharing and Mudharaba loan formulas are not followed because they are very complicated and they need big capital, large projects and high administrative capacity.

Although the banks do not offer loans without interest, 33.3% of the cases of the study have indicated that poor women get the loan from the banks without interest in the mode of Gard Hassan. Gard Hassan is the only mode for Zakat Fund and only accessible for 33.3% of the Khalawi women. Therefore, based on the Zakat Fund policy, the Credit and Social Development and Agriculture Banks are obligated to adopt this mode of finance for such projects and bear such violation of the Sudan Central Bank rules and pay the administrative cost of the women's loans and provide the loan without interest.

However, 25.5 % of the Khalawi women completed high secondary school and university level and certainly they are not considered very poor. But they benefit from the loans without interest better than other SWGU target groups who get loan from the SudaTel with interest. In a few cases some women from the other SWGU target groups who failed to pay the required instalments due to being poor and widowed. They joined a new group and shifted to Gard Hassan to continue their projects by being registered at Zakat Fund via the assistance of the SGWU. The SWGU followed another strategy. In case of the success of the Khalawi women's projects, the female entrepreneurs have to pay some undetermined amount of money from the profit as contribution to improve the Khalawi infrastructure. This is a way of maintaining the Khalawi through women's collaborative efforts. Such a strategy of solidarity, which has been considered by the poverty reduction programmes as a main objective, is well appreciated by the Khalawi women since it has been based on the religion and social values of the Muslim society. At the same time it solves the problem of financial discrimination of having two kinds of loans Murabaha and Gard Hassan loans in terms of interest payment. Two issues need to be considered. Are all Khalawi women very poor or is there variation

between women, even within one Khalwa What are the criteria used to measure poverty among Khalawi women and other SWGU female entrepreneurs' groups of the study

. .2. Loan procedures

Table 7.34

Female Entrepreneurs' Opinion
of the Loan Procedures

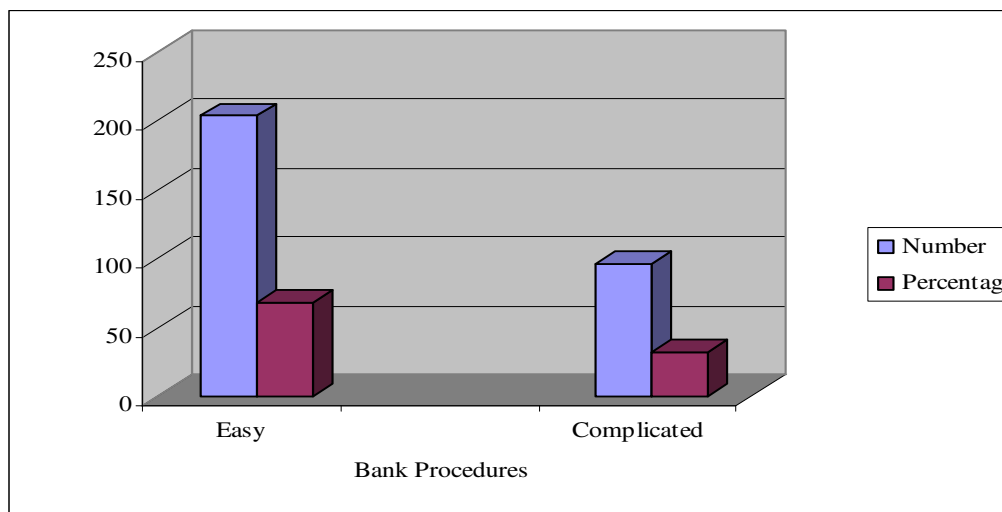
Bank Process	Number	%
Complicated	96	32
Easy	204	68
Total	300	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

The study results indicate that financing female micro-enterprises is not hampered by the bank procedures for 68% of the female entrepreneurs target groups. 32% indicated that the bank procedures are complicated by the collateral, high administrative costs and bank commission fees, and fear of the high risk of default on loans.

Diagram 7.30

Female Entrepreneurs' Opinion about the Loan Procedures



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

From Diagram 7.30 above, 68% of the women sampled indicated that the bank processes for getting the loan was easy. In fact, this is due to the fact that the SWGU staff at the grassroots

level executed most of the bank processes, especially related to raising awareness about women's personal documents requirements, opening a bank account for credit and saving and following up with the bank until the women get approval for the loan. In addition, most of these women were known to the SWGU staff at local level; either they are relatives, friend, attending SWGU activities, or relatives of some influential people. At the final stage, the women are required to go to the bank only once for signatures. 32% of the women mentioned that the bank process is complicated because they do not have collateral. An issue that needs to be raised is how the SWGU will facilitate guarantee issues for women unknown to the staff.

. .2. Bank processes

Table 7.35

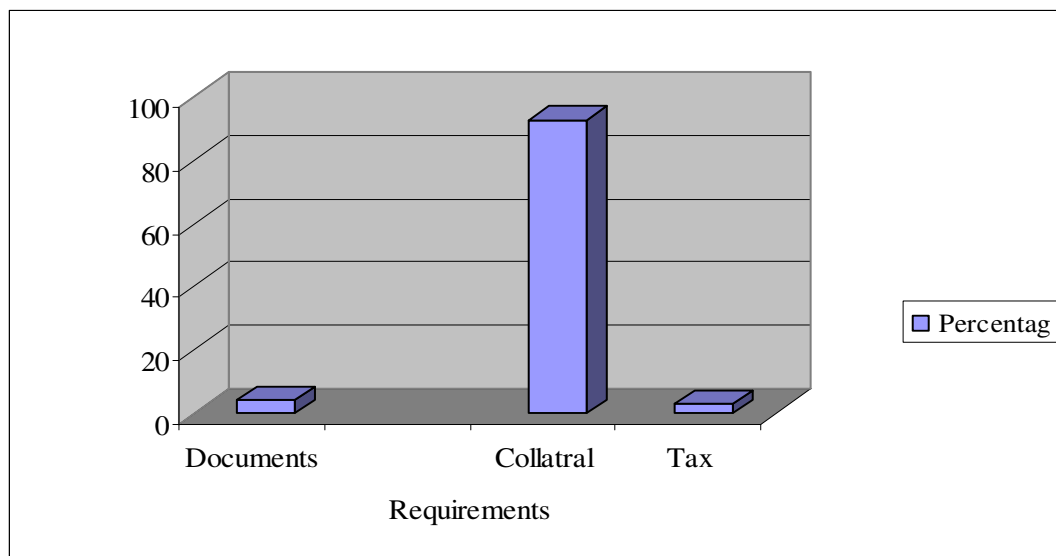
Bank Processes

Bank Processes	Number	%
Documented papers	4	4.2
Collaterals	89	92.7
Receipts	3	3.1
Total	96	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.31

Bank Processes



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

According to the bank's guarantee policies these policies are flexible for some bank clients or producers but not for poor women. And that is true because bank policy is very rigid, imposing the rules of acceptance of a personal guarantee from a third party through cheques other guarantees including storage of raw materials and assets. As shown in the diagram (7.31) above, it is found that almost all of the 32% of the female entrepreneurs who indicated that the bank processes are complicated mentioned that such complications are due to the collateral issue. Collateral represents a constraint for most poor women attempting to get a loan and start their microcredit projects. Collateral includes either a bank cheque or a person's word. Most of the women lack such collateral or any other complicated forms of collateral, like mortgage of assets, especially gold; a documented collateral letter from another bank, or pawned goods. Other collateral facilitated by the SWGU for the microcredit projects is the adoption of a cultural and religious collateral mediator. This religious and cultural collateral is a documented Islamic Oath, obtained from the court that obligated the female entrepreneur to pay back the loan. And because, socially and morally, the woman is not supposed to expose her self to the court and prison in the case of default, most women pay back their loan instalments. In some cases, if the project is a group loan, the group can be considered as collateral. Also there is other social collateral, like the village chief- Sheikh, local people's committees or other important persons known to the bank. A smaller percentage of the female entrepreneurs, 6.3%, indicated that the complications are from the preparation and presentation of documented papers and bills required by the bank. Therefore, the SWGU staffs have to facilitate these procedures.

. .2. Formal financial institutions regulations

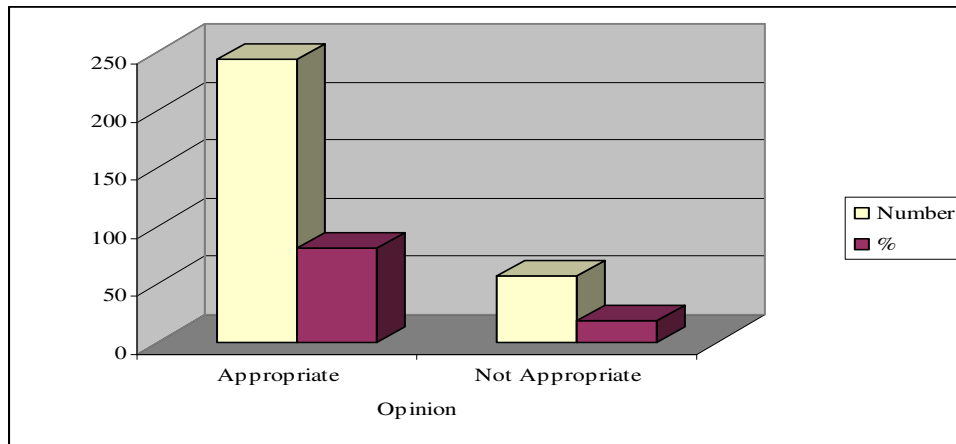
Table 7.36
 Bank Regulations and the Appropriateness of the
 Microcredit Grace Period

Grace Period	Number	%
Appropriate	243	81
Not Appropriate	57	19

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.32

Bank Regulations and the Appropriateness of the
Microcredit Grace Period



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

The study results, reflected in Diagram 7.32 above, indicate that commencement of the grace period of the loan is seen as appropriate for 81% of the microcredit female entrepreneurs who operate non agriculture projects. During this period the female entrepreneurs managed to save money from the microcredit projects and start paying the first instalments because the production, marketing and income are quick in occurrence.

19% of the female entrepreneurs who operate the agriculture and animal husbandry projects, in addition to the female entrepreneurs who operate the production centre, said that the grace period is not appropriate in terms of disbursement of the loans. They preferred the grace period to start at the beginning of the production season which commences in the rainy season from July – October.

The grace period should correspond to the first three months of the production season. The female entrepreneurs will not be able to save some money since products are not harvested. After this period they will immediately start paying the instalments and may pay more than what is required for each instalment. Thus, the results of the study have indicated that the disbursement of the loan and commencement of the grace period should vary from one project to another based on the kind of project and its products. Therefore, female entrepreneurs' seasonal projects, like agriculture, animal husbandry and dairy projects should be treated by the SWGU, the banks and other financial institutions differently. In these cases, the grace

period might also be long and the payments could occur immediately after the harvest season for agriculture projects in one to three instalments. During milk production season for dairy farm projects instalments might be limited to three or four instalments that are paid monthly during the production season. Other small projects also have quick returns, like light trading, industry and poultry farms, therefore the grace period is not long.

Also it was found that 17.5% of the target sample who indicated that the grace period is not appropriate changed their projects from sheep raising to vegetable selling. This also happened for some female entrepreneurs who engaged in light trading projects like clothes and cosmetics trading, selling these clothes to other women in monthly instalments. If she failed to collect the instalments from other women on time she would be unable to pay her instalment to the bank on time. She would enter into another kind of service microcredit project such as selling snacks and ice cream at schools. Therefore, selection of the projects, the projects implementation and its production time are crucial factors in determining the grace period of the projects.

. .2. Sufficiency of the loan size

Table: 7.37

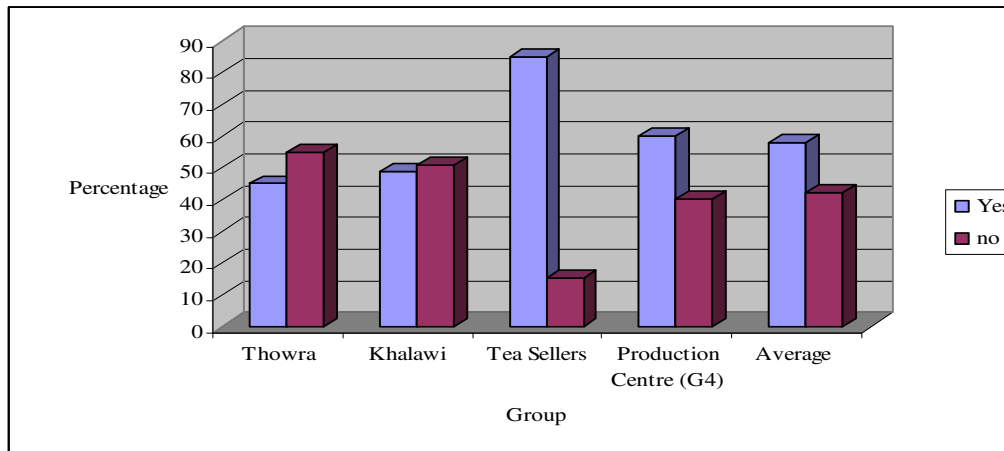
Sufficiency of the Loan Size

	Thowra		Khalawi		Tea Sellers		Production Centre (G4)		Average
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Sufficient Loan									
Yes	45	45	49	49	68	85	12	60	58
no	55	55	51	51	12	15	8	40	42
Total	100	100	100	100	80	100	20	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.33

Sufficiency of the Loan Size



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

As it shown in Diagram 7.33 above, 58% of the female entrepreneurs reported that the size of the loan is sufficient for them to establish their businesses, while 42 % said the loan was not sufficient. Out of the group which report the loan size is sufficient, the majority are tea sellers, followed by milk production centre entrepreneurs, then Khalawi entrepreneurs and finally Al Thowra entrepreneurs.

The majority of the group who reported that the loan size was not sufficient are Al Thowra entrepreneurs. They said the loan size was not enough and that a larger loan would assist them in establishing a bigger business, allowing them to earn more income and benefit more from the bank services and other modes like Musharaka loan. Al Thowra female entrepreneurs were previously involved in small scale business and aware of bank loans. The same ideas were also shared by 51% of educated Khalawi women.

The milk production entrepreneurs of the production centre said that the size of the cash loan was not enough. They received a loan in kind from the bank in terms of equipment and tools to be located at the centre. These assets will belong to them after completing the loan instalments. They receive cash to buy the milk from the outside and process it inside the centre. The milk production entrepreneurs said that the cash is not enough to buy the milk. Sometimes they find problems in getting milk from other producers and the milk is not of good quality or outside milk producers cheat female entrepreneurs by adding water to the

milk. Thus they need to buy and raise their own sheep and goats, which require larger cash loans.

Tea sellers mentioned that the loan is inconvenient for them. The tea seller female entrepreneurs received the loan in terms of equipment, like a mobile table with shelves and drawers, a small gas cylinder and cooker, tea pots, cups, and coffee sets. They mentioned that the gas cylinder is very small and the table is not wide enough to prepare doughnuts. Thus to have a wide mobile table and a big gas cylinder by expanding the size of the loan is good for them.

. 2.9 Period of the instalments

Table 7.38

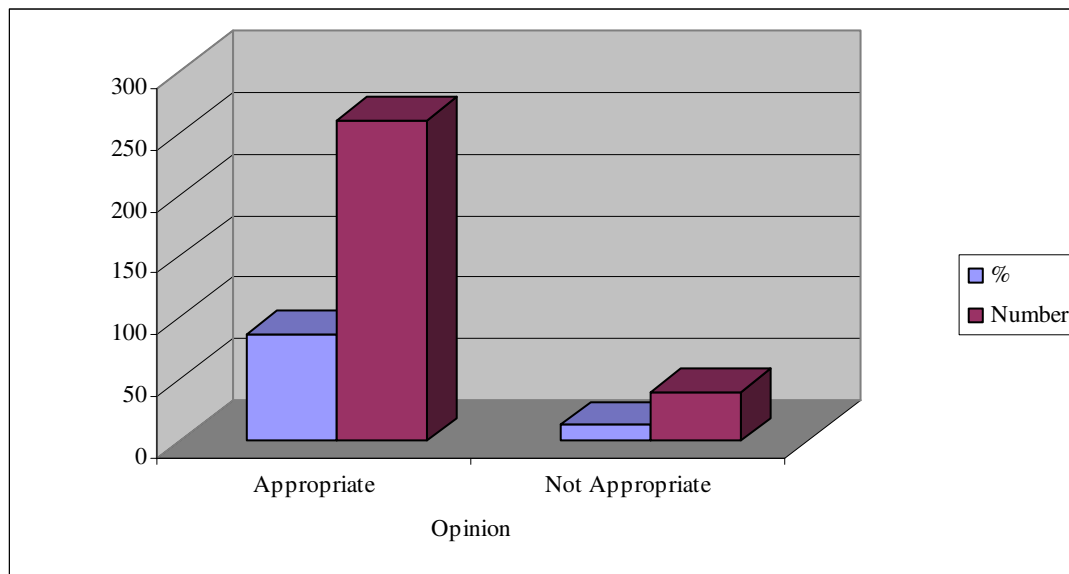
Appropriateness of the Period of Instalments

Period of instalments	%	Number
Appropriate	86.7	260
Not Appropriate	13.3	40

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.34

Appropriateness of the Period of Instalments



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

From Table 7.38 and Diagram 7.34 above, 86.7% of the female entrepreneurs indicated that the monthly instalments of the microcredit projects are appropriate. Usually the period is for one year, including the grace period, because these small trade projects are of short life span and have quick returns. In addition, some of the households are salaried families, causing female entrepreneurs depending on their husband's income, like some of Al Thowra and Khalawi female entrepreneurs, for the repayment of the loan. This indicates that the female microcredit entrepreneurs have high rates of return on the funds they use, but they lack access to sufficient funds when it is time to pay the instalments. Hence, despite often high returns to capital, especially working capital, their very limited amount of funds available means their aggregate return remains low, thus perpetuating a life in poverty.

13.3% of the female entrepreneurs said that the monthly instalments period of the microcredit projects is not appropriate, like Kazagil entrepreneurs. Usually these are the seasonal agriculture projects or agro-industrial processing projects that depend on harvesting seasons and availability of agricultural inputs and raw materials. According to the female entrepreneurs, these agro-processing projects need to be stored after harvesting rather than sold for paying instalments. Cheese, samin, butter, tomato paste and dried and ground vegetables need to be properly stored for selling in peak seasons to create suitable profits. One can conclude that SWGU microfinance savings and projects exist to provide female entrepreneurs access to funds. It was proven that with additional funds and diversification of products, many female micro-entrepreneurs could multiply their earnings and build for the future. This is especially true of small trade activities with a high turnover of capital.

. .2. 0 Periods of paying the instalments

Table 7.39

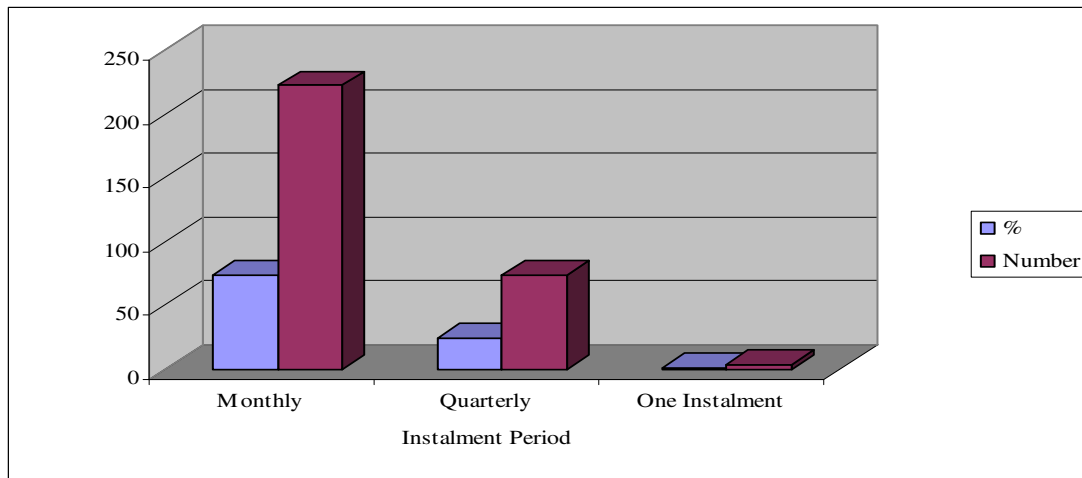
Periods of Payment of Instalments

Payment of Instalments	%	Number
Monthly	74	222
Quarterly	24.7	74
One Instalment	1.3	4

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.35

Periods of Payment of Instalments



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Table 7.39 and Diagram 7.35 show that 74% of the female entrepreneurs preferred to pay the instalments monthly. This method of instalment payment is suitable for projects with quick daily returns. These households have limited and sometimes seasonal income and female entrepreneurs may fail to pay the instalments because these households consume any money on hand to meet their needs for food, educational fees and medical treatments. 24.7 % of the entrepreneurs preferred to pay the instalments quarterly. These are female entrepreneurs who are involved in animal husbandry projects, rearing rams and calves for meat production. 1.3% of the women preferred to pay all instalments after harvest season. These entrepreneurs run agricultural crop projects and they prefer to make full payment immediately after selling the crops.

. .2. Payment of instalments

Table 7.40

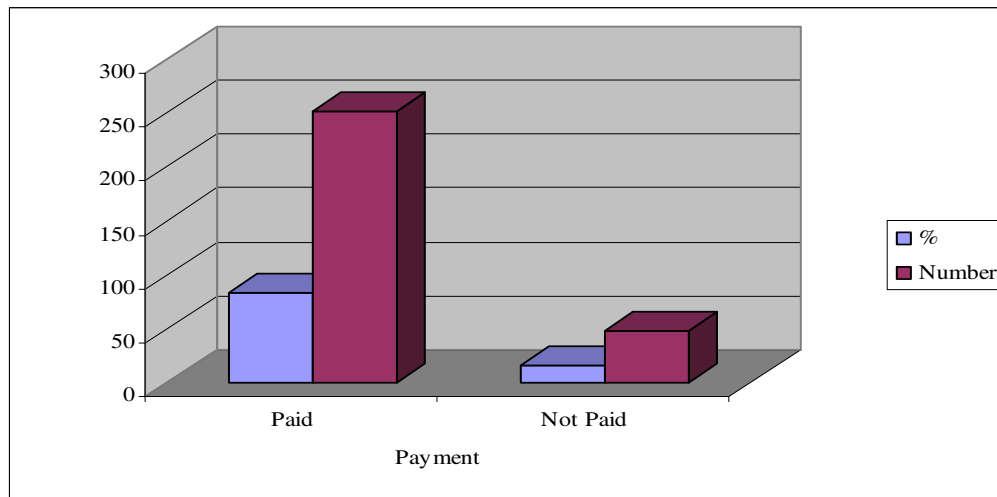
Payment of the Instalments

Paying the instalment	%	Number
Paid	84	252
Not Paid	16	48

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.36

Payment of the Instalments



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Table 7.41 and Diagram 7.36 of the study have indicated that the repayment ratio is high among female entrepreneurs. As shown from the diagram, 84% of the female entrepreneurs managed to pay their instalments in minimum time. This indicates that female entrepreneurs are committed to pay the money they owe at the right time to gain the trust of the financial institutions. 16% of the female entrepreneurs of the sample indicated that they did not manage to pay their instalments in time because there were many constraints encountered in the marketing of their products. These women said that they did not research the marketing issue before starting the projects. They found that some of their friends' projects had success so they imitated these projects without a proper feasibility study. The issue of marketing and the needs of the people for such products were not considered by the women. This led the women to look for markets outside their residential areas; consequently, they did not pay their instalments in time.

The study found that out of 225 female entrepreneurs, 80% paid their instalments by themselves and in time. This indicates their commitment to pay their debts without being reminded by the SWGU or the bank. 22 female entrepreneurs paid their instalments after receiving a reminder from the SWGU staff which worked to mediate between the female entrepreneurs and the bank. 19 female entrepreneurs paid their instalments after receiving a reminder from the bank.

. 2. 2 Problems and risk facing female entrepreneurs

Table 7.41

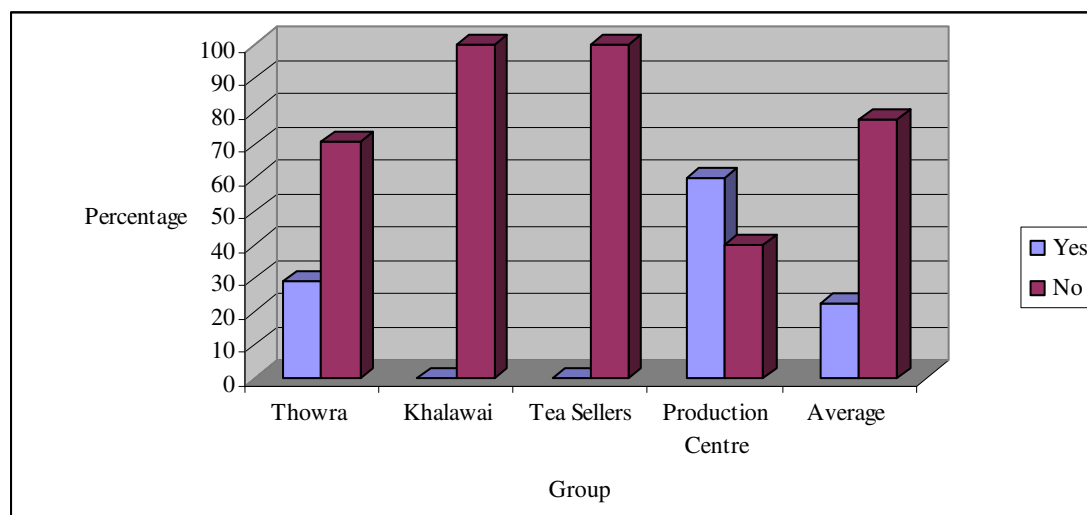
Problems and Risks Facing Female Entrepreneurs in the Payment of the Instalments

Risk	Thowra		Khalawi		Tea Sellers		Production Centre (G4)		Average
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	No	%
Yes	29	29	0	0	0	0	12	60	22.25
No	71	71	100	100	80	100	8	40	77.75
Total	100	100	100	100	80	100	20	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.37

Problems and Risks Facing female Entrepreneurs in the Payment of the Instalments



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Table 7.41 and Diagram 7.37 show that 22.25% found problems when implementing their savings and microcredit projects and 77.75 did not find obstacles to implementing their savings and microcredit projects.

. 2. Coping strategies

Coping strategies adopted by female entrepreneurs to solve the problems of their microcredit projects is through getting access to more earnings to properly establish their projects, manage and deal with the small size of their loans, solve the problems of insufficient funding and making payments on their loans are indicated in the Table 7.42 and Diagram 7.38 below:

Table 7.42

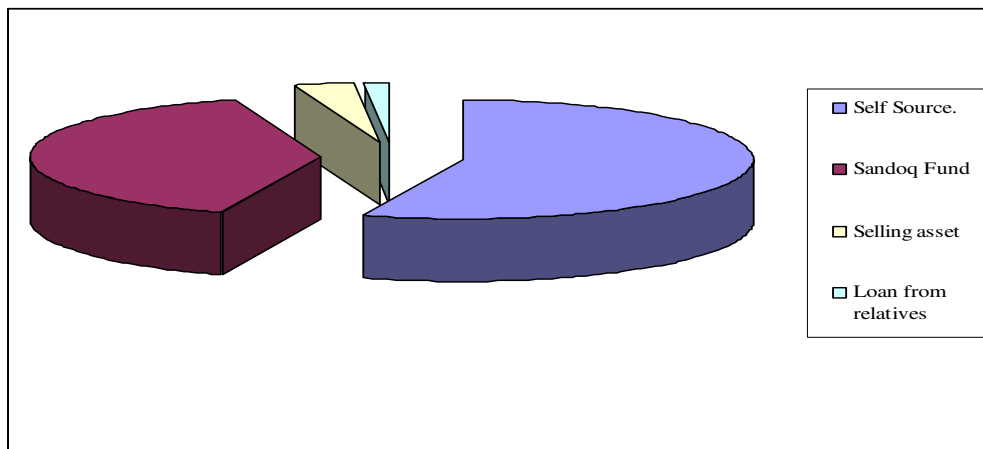
Coping Strategies Adopted by the Female Entrepreneurs

Coping strategy	%	Number
Self Source.	55.6	70
Sandoq Fund	39.7	50
Selling assets	3.2	4
Loan from relative	1.5	2

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 7.38

Coping Strategies Adopted by the Female Entrepreneurs



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

As indicated in Table 7.37 Sufficiency of the Loan Size, 42% of the female entrepreneurs reported that the loan size was not sufficient for them to establish their microcredit projects and run them smoothly. Thus they had to find other informal methods and coping strategies to get access to funds. Table 7.42 and Diagram 7.38 indicate that female entrepreneurs rely on four coping strategies. These are self source, Sandoq fund, selling of assets or loan from relative.

Also, Table 7.42 and Diagram 7.38 show that the entrepreneurs who said that the loan was not sufficient to establish the microcredit project looked for other sources of funding. 55.6% of the women said that the household has its own source of funds. They keep some money to assist the family when facing crises or emergency situations in their lives, accumulated by cuts from daily household expenses. 39.7% of the women entrepreneurs said they found funds from Sandoq Fund, the social collaborative and cooperative saving fund accumulated by women and distributed in intervals as mentioned in Chapter 6. Sandoq Fund is very famous among all female target groups and it is used to solve any risk facing female micro-enterprises or any economic problems facing households. Sandoq Fund has its own rules and regulations and the female entrepreneurs prefer to save money through Sandoq Fund. 3.2% of the female entrepreneurs indicated that they sold their gold and in some cases old dresses, dishes or furniture to pay off their loans. Women in Sudan value gold very much and used it as ornament as well as method of saving money. Women sell their gold when the household faces an emergency or unexpected situation. Most of the banks in Sudan encourage female entrepreneurs to mortgage their gold as collateral to establish their microcredit projects. A few female entrepreneurs, 1.5 %, managed to get funds as a loan from other friends and relatives and they reported that although this social solidarity method is well practiced in Sudan, this kind of borrowing is now diminishing due to poverty.

Financial institutions supporting the implementation of the poverty alleviation strategy for women are Zakat Social Development Fund and the SudaTel in the form of revolving loans or microcredits to economically empower poor female entrepreneurs. Revolving loan funds and savings and microcredit projects are two faces of one coin. Both are considered empowering tools for poverty reduction although they differ in the financial mode. As mentioned earlier in this chapter the SWGU approved fund was equal to 500,000,000 SD for the revolving loan fund and the savings and microcredit projects. The SWGU's performance is illustrated in Table 7.43 and Diagram 7.39 below.

Table 7.43

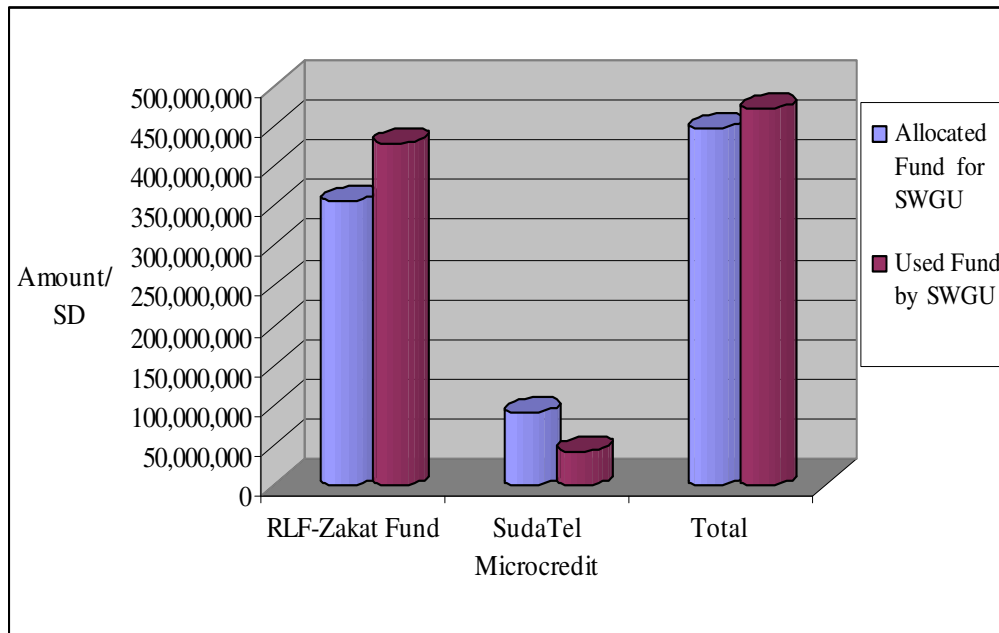
Performance of the SWGU Revolving Loan Fund
and the Credit Projects up to 2005

Kinds of Microcredit	Allocated Fund for SWGU(SD)	Used Fund /SWGU (SD)	Target
RLF-Zakat Fund	354,880,000	427,700,000	856
SudaTel Microcredit	91,500,000	42,810,000	866
Total	446,380,000	470,510,000	

Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2005:3)
performance of 9 states up to 2004

Diagram 7.39

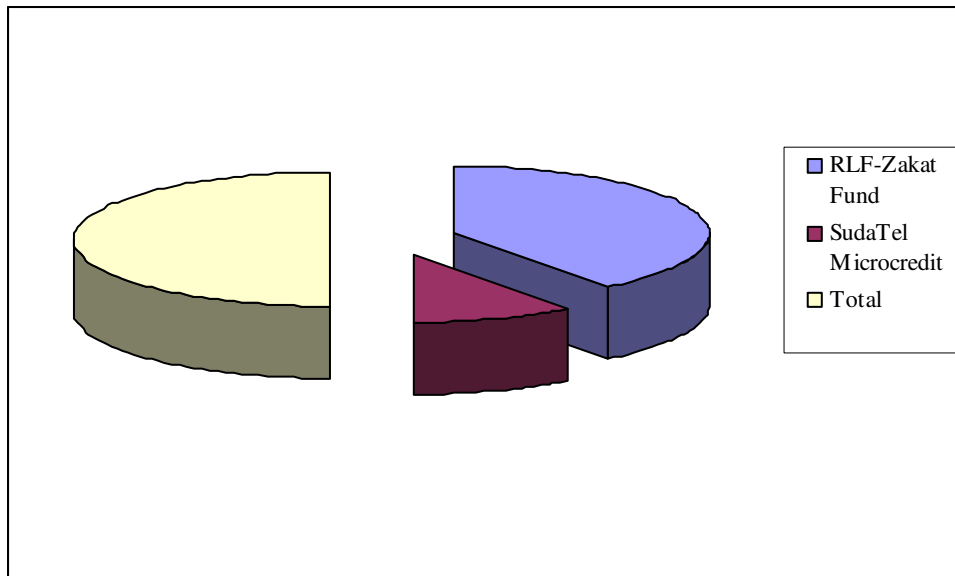
Performance of the SWGU Revolving Loan Fund
and the Credit Projects up to 2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2005:3)

Diagram 7.40

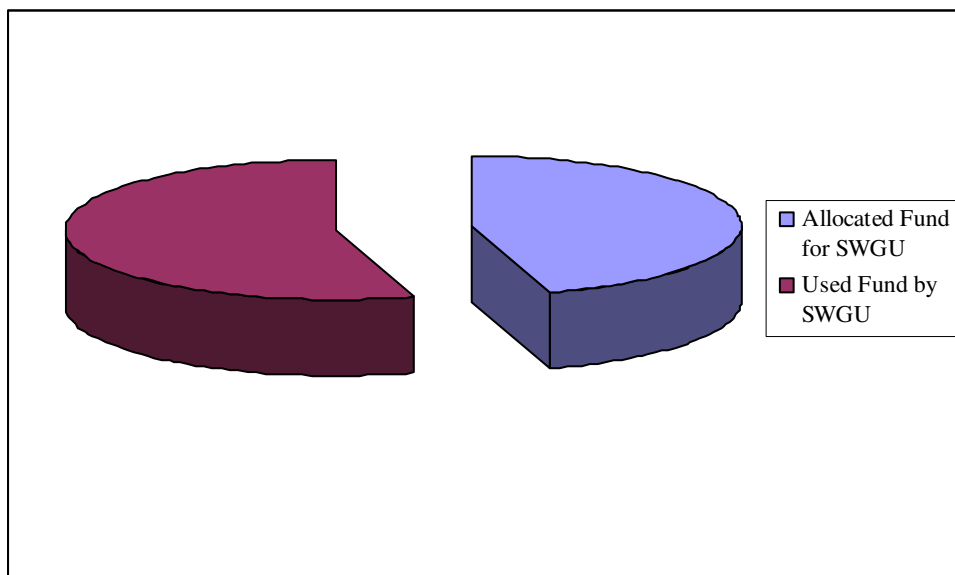
Allocated Fund for the SWGU Savings and Microcredit and
Revolving Loan Fund Projects up to 2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2005:3)

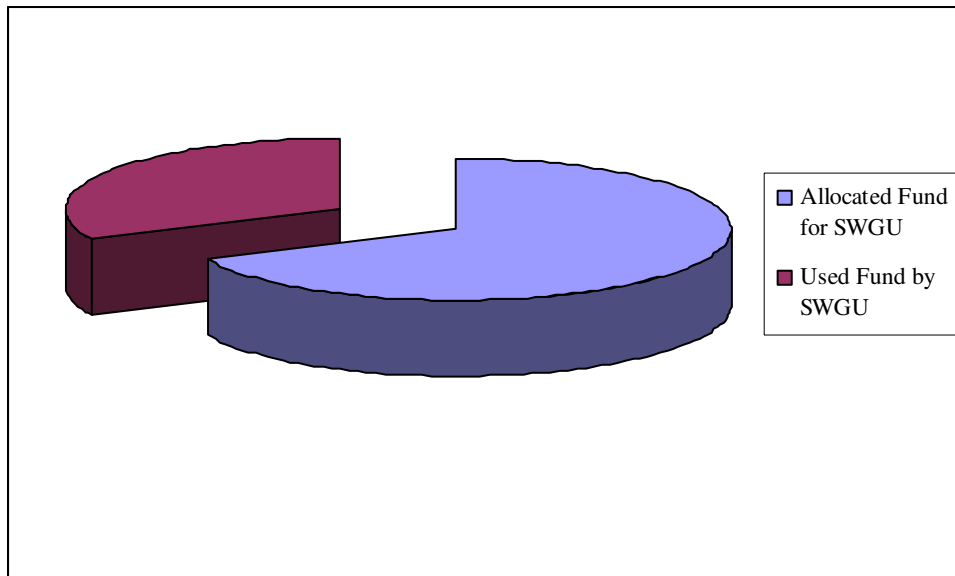
Diagram 7.41

Performance of the SWGU Zakat Fund for Poverty Alleviation
Revolving Loan Fund Projects up to 2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2005:3)

Performance of the SWGU SudaTel
Savings and Microcredit Projects up to 2005



Source: Own data collection and analysis, 2006 compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 2005:3)

- . **Administrative role of the Sudanese Women General Union**

- . . **Structure establishment**

Under the decentralization system of government, the state is responsible for the management and administration of the savings and microcredit projects and other poverty reduction activities. As shown in Chapter 6, the Economic Secretariat of the SWGU General Secretariat is responsible for all coordination of the projects' activities at the national level. The same is also required at the state level in which the Economic Secretariat of the state SWGU General Secretariat is also responsible for planning, coordination, implementation, monitoring and evaluation as well as reporting to the national level. Such tasks need proper administrative structure with well qualified personnel to handle all constraints, identify real needs and properly prepare future state development plans that will be incorporated with the national development plans and strategies.

To manage the savings and microcredit projects at the state and local level, a hierarchal structure was established before the implementation of the savings and microcredit projects in each state. In each state the hierarchal structure consists of the Consultative Administrative Committee and other supportive sub-Committees. The Consultative Administrative Committee for female entrepreneurs' savings and microcredit projects is staffed as follows:

1. State Governor/Wally (honourable Chair Person)
2. The State Finance Minister, General manager
3. SWGU State Economic Development Secretariat (Chair Person)
4. SWGU State Secretariat, Manager for savings and microcredit projects (Reporter)
5. Manager of the Credit and Social Development Bank Branch (or Manager of Al Neilean Bank for Industrial Development, Agriculture Bank, etc based on the bank facility available in the state) or Investment, Credit and Social Development Bank, Deputy chair person
6. Member of the SWGU, State Economic Development
7. State Ministry of Welfare and Social Development, Women's Directorate, member.
8. State Ministry of Economics, Women's Planning and Development Directorate, member.
9. Other sub-committees include accounting and SWGU Local Secretariats members (3 each state) as supervisors for the savings and microcredit projects. For more details see the hierarchal structure of the female entrepreneur's savings and microcredit projects Annexes-1: Chart 6.3 page 452.

The Consultative Committee members of the female entrepreneurs' savings and microcredit projects had been oriented in the following:

1. The projects and its purposes and the progress of the implementations
2. Discussion of the female entrepreneurs project proposals that need to be funded and the funding channels.
3. Discussion of the content of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Credit and Social Development Bank and the SWGU

The Consultative Committee mandate includes the

1. Fund raising from different banks and financial institutions.
2. Supervision for the female entrepreneurs Microcredit and Savings Projects

The number of the female supervisors for the savings and microcredit projects depends on the number of the female entrepreneurs and the distances covered. The criteria adopted for the selection of the female supervisors is based on their experiences in women's development, technical studies in banking systems, grassroots working experience and strong personality.

The salaries of the administrative staff are paid from interest on the loans as the following:

- SWGU State Secretariat, Manager for female entrepreneurs savings and microcredit projects: 75,000 LS/ Month
- Projects Accountant: 40,000 LS/Month
- SWGU Local Secretariats supervisor: 30,000 LS/Month

Administrative cost for the savings and microcredit projects' staff varies between 105,000 LS/ Month (in case of three supervisors) to 325,000 LS/ Month (in case of seven supervisors).

Role of the SWGU Supervisors at the state level includes the preparation of the project proposals with female entrepreneurs and submit them to the bank for technical feasibility studies.

. .2 Capacity building

Two categories of the staff of the SWGU were involved in the training courses organised by the SWGU at national, state and local levels. SWGU Economic Secretariat staff at the national level and state level staff that work as Social Development workers and who shall assist in the administration of the female savings and microcredit projects. They were trained in various fields of development as shall be illustrated in Table 7.44 below:

Table 7.44

Training Courses for the Economic Development Secretariats Staff of the SWGU Savings and Microcredit Projects, 2003

No	Participants	No. of Participants	Training Content	Organized by	Location	Duration	Remarks
1	State Economic Development Secretariat	20	Development Planning	SWGU	Khartoum	one week	(all states of the projects sites)
2	National Economic Development Secretariat	1	Training of trainers (advanced)	ILO	Khartoum	Two weeks	
3	National Economic Development Secretariat	1	Leadership training of extension field workers	ILO	Khartoum	Two weeks	
4	National Economic Development Secretariat	1	Planning and management of Small Scale Projects		Italy	Two weeks	

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Practical exercise training and capacity building started after the first step of recruiting a team of SWGU local personnel and gathering the necessary background information to help design the program based and, subsequently, to implement all activities after a thorough training period. The number of SWGU staff varied from state and approximately 20 female SWGU staff members per state were recruited through advertisements and word-of-mouth. Initially, most of them were university graduates with work experience in one of the social sciences. There were a few recruits with high-level skills in development work, mainly savings and microcredit projects. The SWGU staffs are of different backgrounds, ages and levels of education and experience. They are university graduates and secondary school dropouts. For some, this was their first job; others had years of experience as teachers or social workers. Between them, the staff represented many of the ethnic, religious and national groups, and spoke all the major languages of the people of the rural and semi-urban areas.

Under the direction of the state economic secretariat, the new staff immediately began working on the identification of the savings and microcredit projects and gathering some information on the socio-economic status of the women. This small range survey primarily sought to understand the economic life of the women. State SWGU staff gathered information on what services were available, where different communities tended to congregate, who belonged to the most vulnerable groups, average levels of income, what kinds of businesses were carried out and by whom, and what technologies were being used. Female staff also set out specifically to assess employment patterns and opportunities for women. From these findings the staff obtained a comprehensive understanding of the basic workings of the informal sector which enabled them to identify what kind of help would be most useful and how it could best be given. Following the data collection, the female entrepreneurs businesses were identified and the report sent to the SWGU headquarters, National Economic Secretariat, for approval. Halfway through the survey period formal staff training in small scale business development and management began. This training, which lasted for three months, was interspersed with field assignments visiting small businesses run by women to become acquainted with their operations, supply channels for raw materials and market outlets. Staff members then shared their findings at seminars and reporting sessions which were an important element of the training.

Training at the national and state levels was carried out by trainers who ran the training sessions using mainly their own teaching materials developed during their years of work

experience. They also used the curriculum of an expert in small enterprise development. Case studies of small businesses in many different countries were studied intensively and role playing was used as an important part of the training. Also included was the teaching of basic methods of accounting and business analysis. The goals of the training were three-fold:

1. To familiarize staff with specific techniques and procedures, such as analyzing a profit and loss account, interviewing female entrepreneurs, and determining what assistance would be most useful in each individual case;
2. To sensitize the staff to the needs and problems of small businesses and their owners and, most importantly, how to respond to the needs of different communities (refugees and Sudanese, Moslems and Christians, men and women) and help overcome the prejudices and problems that can arise from such a diversity of cultures and backgrounds; and
3. To develop a team spirit among the staff members, who themselves come from many different communities and backgrounds.

This elaborate, field-oriented training not only gave the staff a sound knowledge about and confidence in their work, but it also brought them, early in their training, into direct contact with the female entrepreneurs. They gradually became known and accepted in the slum communities so that information became progressively easier to obtain. Toward the end of the training period, the final project strategy was drafted, with direct input from all SWGU staff members. All details were thoroughly discussed so that everyone would fully understand not only the method of operation, but also the underlying concepts. It was in this way that the aims of the program, the kinds of services it would offer, who would qualify for assistance, and how it would be structured, were finally determined.

The theoretical part of the training content of the development planning training course for the State Secretariat economic development secretariat staff at State Congress includes the following topics:

- Concepts and types of planning,
- Concept of Development,
- Preparation of project proposals,
- Methods of project budgeting,

- Project implementation and constraints facing small scale projects,
- Time management,
- Meeting management.

20 SWGU basic Secretariat staffs, Economic Development, savings and microcredit projects supervisors were trained in:

1. Planning and Development concepts,
2. Women's group composition and structure,
3. Bank procedures and dealings,
4. Project selection and management,
5. Report writing and follow-up process,
6. The objectives of the Credit and Social Development Bank and women's microcredit and savings projects.

Staff members of the Basic Secretariat of the Basic Congress at village and residential levels need to be considered for training topics related to gender and participatory planning approaches because they are working closely with female entrepreneurs at the grassroots level. Such training will allow them to learn how to deal with the daily problems, real needs and constraints for female entrepreneurs, bank staff and other institutions at the community level. Training courses for the female entrepreneurs of SWGU microcredit project for the four groups, tea sellers, and Khalawi, Thowra and milk production centre producers includes How to start your microcredit project. The course was executed by the SWGU staff at Khartoum and Kordufan states. According to the female entrepreneurs, the content of the training includes the following topics:

- Preparation of a marketing plan,
- Work labour force laws and female labour rights,
- Project cost estimation and accounting
- Project budgeting.

Other technical trainings courses were offered by the SWGU for building the capacity of the female entrepreneurs at the production centres. Female milk production entrepreneurs at Kazagil were trained in cheese, butter (Samin) and dry yogurt making using new milk production technology. The female entrepreneurs at Fitahab Khalawi centre trained in the

technical skills of home economics and food processing techniques, cooking, sewing and handicrafts.

Table 7.45

Female Microcredit Entrepreneurs' Capacity Building Project 2001-2003

No	Participants	No. of Participants	Training Content	Institution	Location	Duration	Remarks
1	Female entrepreneurs (Khartoum)	280	How to start your project	SWGU	Khartoum	One week	
2	Female entrepreneurs Northern Kordufan state (Kazagil)	20	How to start your project	SWGU	Kordufan	One week	
	Total	300					

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

• Constraints

There is a growing recognition of the importance of female savings and microcredit projects as one major means to combat poverty in Sudan. Despite these efforts, and given the volume of poverty in Sudan, more efforts are still to be made. There are many constraints and obstacles facing the effectiveness of the SWGU programmes and policies at grassroots level. Following are the risks facing the female entrepreneurs 'savings and microcredit projects implemented by the SWGU:

- Insufficient capital to reach the target female entrepreneurs in all states as stated in the poverty reduction strategy. Approval of 66.3% of the total fund in 2000 for the SWGU to implement the savings and microcredit projects led to priority given to fund the northern states. Only one southern state, Bahar Al Gazal, was covered by the savings

and microcredit projects during 1999-2004. This indicates bias of financial allocation between different states.

- Delay in receiving bank credits. According to the SWGU reports, first there was no recent base line data survey available to assist in the implementation of the projects. Thus it was agreed to wait for the UNICEF MSM results in 1999. Then the change of the Minister of Finance in 2000 and a lack of stability in the country. However, delay in receiving the approved fund of 500,000,000 SD from the bank led to a delay in the implementation of the savings and microcredit projects in most of the states. In Khartoum state projects funds were expected in 2000, but received it in 2001. The lack of Credit and Social Development Bank branches at Bahar Al Gazal, West and Northern Darfur states and S. Kordufan caused a delay in the early implementation of the projects. Instead of starting in 2001, they started in 2002 due to long process of getting agreement with the Agriculture Bank to work on behalf of the Credit and Social Development Bank.
- Some states could not financially support the female savings and microcredit projects. This is obvious from delays in releasing funds by the State Finance Ministries. Red Sea state was included in the plan for SWGU savings and microcredit projects. Because the state was not ready to implement the projects, the implementation was delayed until 2003. However, 5 million SD was finally contributed by each of the following states: Red Sea, Nahar Al Nile, Southern Equatorial state, White Nile, Al Gezira and Al Rank.
- War and conflict affect the implementation of the female savings and microcredit projects. Southern Darfur state was unwilling to pay its contribution of 2 million SD to support funding the savings and microcredit projects due to a large number of internally displaced people who have settled around the big cities. This put pressure on the states' social development expenditures to meet their basic needs. Southern Kordufan delayed making its contribution of 2 million SD due to a delay in receiving funds from the national Ministry of Finance. The situation was aggravated by the war that caused the state not to pay at all its financial contribution. Northern Darfur was also affected, postponing the implementation of the female savings and microcredit projects for a long time. The project started with 17 female entrepreneurs out of 88 who were planned to begin projects. Although the savings and microcredit projects were very successful and the ratio of repayment reached 99%, the Credit and Social

Development Bank froze all of its financial services. The state SWGU staff invested the funds in a mini-bus to cover the SWGU staff administrative cost.

- Bank policy and rigid bank regulations affected funding of the projects. Nahar Al Niel consists of three big provinces, Atbara, Dammar and Barbar. The budget allocated for the female savings and microcredit projects was equal to 10,500,000 SD. The state had a bank default related to a food security project, gas cylinder and cooker projects which were benefiting poor productive families. It was found that female entrepreneurs did not pay 3,249,100 SD. The bank grasped the opportunity and took that amount of money allocated for the savings and microcredit projects, thus creating a problem of timely implementation of the projects. Since the state did not pay its contribution of 2 million SD, the rest of the fund was utilized for financing 69 female microcredit and savings entrepreneurs.
- Misconceptions about group work contributed to problems in allocations of funds and repayment of loans. The concept of the female entrepreneurs' group work methodology as identified by the SWGU staff for the Social Development and Production Centre was not grasped fully at the national and the state level, especially for group identification, structure and formulation. This situation led to many problems and constraints.
- As mentioned above, the fund for establishing the Social Development and Production Centre was provided by the Zakat Social Development Fund which allocated 26 million SD for 6 centres at White Nile, Sinnar, Al Gezira, Gadarif, Khartoum, Bahar Al Gazal states and western rural areas. SudaTel was responsible for the equipment provision equal to 2.2 million SD per state. The states had to contribute between 1.5 to 2 million SD as determined by the agreement between bank and the SWGU. The loan size would be between 50,000 to 75,000 SD for each female entrepreneur to assist in formulating the groups and buy the production inputs to use the centre facilities and equipment for the production and marketing of their products. Equipment included sewing machines, embroidery tools, food processing equipment, macaroni, sausage and meat mincing machines, spice and peanut grinders, cookers, cheese production equipment and material for leather small industry. Additional supplies included TV sets, video sets, cameras and other educational and training equipment, a generator,

library, books and other stationery. The most problematic centre was at the White Nile state which received a total amount of 2,300,000 SD from SudaTel and used all of it in the establishment of the centre.

- Other constraints include the large sizes of the loan offered, which in some cases reached up to 300,000 SD, in addition the state financial contribution was nil.
- Since poor female entrepreneurs were not consulted and not involved in the decision making process, the equipment remained idle for long time in the centre, leading to delays in repaying the bank loans until the problem was solved. The equipment was used as credits and distributed to 25 female entrepreneurs at the grassroots level. Since some equipment is very expensive, the size of the loan became too large for poor female entrepreneurs to pay off. This led to high default in repayment of the loans.
- While Gadarif and Al Gezira states followed the concept of the SWGU for establishing the centre, they used a huge portion of the approved fund in the centre establishment. Both Gadarif and Al Gezira states adopted the female entrepreneurs group work concept which turned out very satisfactorily, but because the activities were predetermined and the female entrepreneurs were not involved in the initiation of the activities, benefit from these activities were mainly those who live around the centres and who are educated and have leisure time to attend the centre group work instead of the very poor women.
- That situation created a financial deficit in the budget of Al Gezira; consequently, the bank default reached 600,000 SD and required the state SWGU to repay back the fund as well as postponing the second disbursement of the allocated fund.
- Bahar Al Gazal state utilized all the Zakat Social Development Fund for establishing the centre, SudaTel and the state fund for the benefit of the individual poor female entrepreneurs who participated in deciding their own microcredit projects. As discussed in Chapter 5, the microcredit projects were very successful and some female entrepreneurs managed to successfully repay the loans in time. Successful projects entailed 3 slaughtering of bulls projects for one female entrepreneur, 2 generators for power selling for one female entrepreneur, 2 vegetable gardening, Jabarik, for one female entrepreneur. All loans were individual loan and in a few cases, like the generator project, the size of the loan was big because the equipment was expensive.
- In Northern Kordufan, Kazagil village, at the milk production centre the poor female entrepreneurs groups were participating right from the beginning, deciding on their

production activities and taking full responsibility for managing their own microcredit projects. In addition the SWGU staff and the bank adhered to the rules of offering the loans of a size not exceeding 75,000 SD. However, Kazagil milk production female entrepreneurs had their own problems related to marketing and the rigid and inflexible instalment repayments.

- Administrative problems led to default and misallocation of funds. Some female entrepreneurs whose microcredit projects were taken by the bank due to default in repayment of the instalments complained that the microcredit projects were registered under their names for long time. This situation caused the SWGU staff to follow them for repayment of the loans and returned it to the bank. Also, SWGU staff at local level had to follow the female entrepreneurs to their residences to collect the instalments. In most cases they had to travel long distances to reach them. In all cases the state SWGU staff at local level lacked the transport facilities to collect the instalments in time, especially for far remote areas.
- In addition, there was a delay in training the SWGU staff and female entrepreneurs by the staff of the bank. Lack of qualified SWGU staff at Southern Kordufan led to the delay of starting the savings and microcredit projects.
- In Northern Darfur, Al Fashir, the work stopped for long time due to the same problem.
- In addition, the salary of the SWGU local staff depended on the microcredit interest and the percentage received by the SWGU. This salary was not sufficient for the state SWGU staff to cover the administrative cost of the SWGU local staff. This led some states like Nahar Al Niel SWGU to use 623,200 SD (US 2492.80) from the budget allocated to the savings and microcredit projects to meet the administrative cost for its local staff.
- White Nile state was also allocated 2.2 million SD for the savings and microcredit projects to benefit 83 female entrepreneurs, but part of the fund was used by the state SWGU staff to create one Savings and microcredit project for their own administrative costs. Also, the creation of consultative councils and local committees did not improve administrative staff performance due to lack of funds.
- The large size of the loans and the large size of the payments were considered one of the constraints reported by the female entrepreneurs. The size of the loan was between 50,000 SD to 75,000 SD for one year (equal to 200 to 300 US). Thus monthly

repayment ranges between 4250 SD (17 US) at a 2% interest rate, to 7187.5 SD (28.75 US) at a 12% interest rate. Daily the female entrepreneur had to save 0.57 US to 0.96 US to repay the instalments at the end of the month. The large size of the individual loan ranged between 150,000 SD (612 US) to 300,000 SD (1,224 US) at an interest rate of 2%. Monthly repayment ranges around 12750 SD (51 US). In most cases the interest rate increased to 12%, thus the loan size increased and the payments were very high. If the national poverty income level is equal to 1- 2 US, how would these poor female entrepreneurs survive to save such an amount for instalments In most cases female entrepreneurs took more than two years to repay the instalments instead of one year.

- From all the ten states it was found that about 15%, equal to 130 poor female entrepreneurs, were unable to repay the loans, out of these 130 women, 100 female entrepreneurs were transferred to be registered at Zakat Social Development Fund to be released from the loan repayment and 30 female entrepreneurs handed over their microcredit projects to the bank to be given to other female entrepreneurs. In Khartoum and Northern Kordufan states, there were 6 female entrepreneurs who were not able to pay the instalments and were transferred to Zakat Social Development Fund. 12 women left their micro-projects which were taken by other female entrepreneurs.
- There was a limited range of the female microcredit projects implemented at the state level as social loans. This issue was raised by Bahar Al Gazal state in their Report 2003 (2003:1). This could be generalized to all the states as household improvement in terms of sanitation and water supply, children's education, transport and health, problems of drought and conflict that led to loss of animals, decrease in agriculture activities, loss of land, etcetera were not addressed explicitly by the poverty reduction strategy and the resulting financial policies; consequently, the bank and the SWGU as implementing agencies failed to assist female entrepreneurs to get access to various kinds of loans and credits and to meet their needs.
- Variations of the bank financial modes of Gard Hassan (without interest) and Murabaha loan with varying degree of interest ranging from 2% to 15% were confusing. Since the women were poor they were supposed to receive the Gard Hassan, but the bank imposed the interest rate and did not stick to the Zakat Social

Development Fund policy. Thus many poor female entrepreneurs developed the negative impression that the SWGU microcredit projects were expensive because of the interest. Some were reluctant to join the projects.

- Delay in receiving the salary or the pension of the female entrepreneurs' husbands caused delay in repayment of instalments as reported by many women in the study areas of Al Thowra. Most of the female entrepreneurs' husbands were government officers and received monthly salaries or pension. In these cases, they sometimes depend on them to assist in the repayment of the instalments.
- It is difficult for some female entrepreneurs to make regular payments due to seasonal types of the economic activities and seasonal returns. The Kazagil milk production female entrepreneurs and other female entrepreneurs in Khartoum states who were involved in animal husbandry and vegetable growing reported that the bank's rigid ways of collecting the monthly instalments was a problem for them. They have to pay the instalments monthly and in time, but their economic activities are seasonal in nature. Harvest and processing of their products occur in specific months of the year and not throughout the year. The bank financial services did not help the female entrepreneurs to bridge the pre- and post-harvest funding gap. The bank collects the instalments and repayments of the loan based on the bank's schedule and not the female entrepreneurs' schedule.
- Difficulty in providing collateral for a loan caused many female entrepreneurs to be reluctant to join the projects. Approved certificates such as personal checks led to the court in the case of default. However, local SWGU staff tried to assist women in obtaining other required certificates, filling out the forms, obtaining the ID card and getting the residential certificate from the local popular committee.
- Any effort to alleviate poverty in Sudan is costly due to low education standards among women; consequently, inadequate understanding of money and bank operations caused female entrepreneurs to depend on SWGU staff to accomplish all the processes and avoid direct contact with bank staff.
- There are no elaborate and consistent long-term government policies and programmes to combat poverty via savings and microcredit projects. Thus policies and programmes cover a small fraction of the target group of the female entrepreneurs and are only partially implemented by the SWGU and other NGOs.

- Policies and programmes to promote savings and microcredit projects in Sudan reflect the supply side approach of assistance in the form of financing and training facilities, with a neglect of policies to improve the access to raw materials, extension of services and infrastructure.
- Supply side policies might not be inappropriate in the case of the widely dispersed and heterogeneous structure of savings and microcredit projects. Demand side policies include the inequality of incomes and discrimination in the regional distribution of projects. Supply side policies are easy for planners and financial institutions to establish. It is difficult to raise questions related to income distribution and to disturb the subsidies offered to large-scale production. Success might be achieved via genuine policy reforms within a long-term plan that includes the economy at large.

. **Conclusion**

Considerable efforts were made from the financing agencies such as SudaTel, Zakat Fund and Credit and Social Development Bank to enhance funding to small scale female entrepreneurs, but national policies and the internal policies of commercial banks have constrained this effort. Moreover, the Sudanese banking and financial institutions' loans to small scale female entrepreneurs were not able to mitigate poverty mainly for reasons related to the characteristics of the Sudanese banking system itself. On the other hand, SWGU staff at all levels devoted great effort to cooperate effectively with other NGOs and mobilise their allocated funds. They reached a huge number of the female entrepreneurs.

In summary the SWGU saving and microcredit projects were insufficiently financed to cover the planned target female entrepreneurs in all states and there was bias of financial allocation between different states. Misconceptions about group work contributed to problems in the allocations of funds and repayment of the two modes of loans. Some states did not commit themselves to release the funds to support the savings and microcredit projects due to war and conflict and priorities of the state were to meet other states' social development expenditures and basic needs than financing saving and microcredit projects.

Bank regulations and procedures includes bank policy and rigid bank regulations affected funding of the projects, created confusion in the two financial modes of the loan and the variations in the rate of interest, bank procedures towards the cases of defaults in repayment were not carefully registered and recorded.

Female entrepreneurs found difficulty in providing collateral due to lack of assets and regular payments due to seasonal types of the economic activities and seasonal returns and delay in receiving the salary of their husband. The large size of the loans and the large size of the payments caused many cases of default in repayments. Also the low education standards among female entrepreneurs caused inadequate understanding of the bank operations and created dependency on SWGU staff to accomplish all the processes and avoid direct contact with bank staff and follow the delay in receiving bank credits.

The impact of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects at the household, personal and the project levels will be explained in detail in Chapter 8.

Chapter Eight: Impact of the savings and microcredit projects

. Introduction

This chapter deals with the impact of the savings and microcredit projects at personal level to assess how the savings and microcredit projects empower women by analysis the female entrepreneurs situations interims of life cycle effect, educational level, marital status, parity, family members, household assets, household water and electricity. Then identify the economic impacts: at the production/ project level by analysis of the uses of the loan, increase in income and production and profit gained from the project to improve their situations and how. The social impact of the microcredit projects on the female entrepreneurs in terms of decision making to control their resources and contribute for improving themselves and their family members will also be considered in this chapter.

.2 Impact at personal level

Demographic factors influence the rate of women's participation in the microcredit projects; these factors include age, marital status and parity. The effect of each of these factors on female participation in the labour force by demographic background is discussed below.

.2. Life cycle effect

Age plays a role in female entrepreneurs' participation because it reflects the stages in the life cycle that are conducive to work in SWGU savings and microcredit projects. That is, older women who have achieved their desired family size or the end of their childbearing years and may be more inclined to work than younger women. On the other hand, younger women may be more educated and less subject to the social constraints that reduce female participation in the labour force.

Female entrepreneurs' participation in SWGU savings and microcredit projects at various ages is presented in Table 8.1 below.

Table 8.1

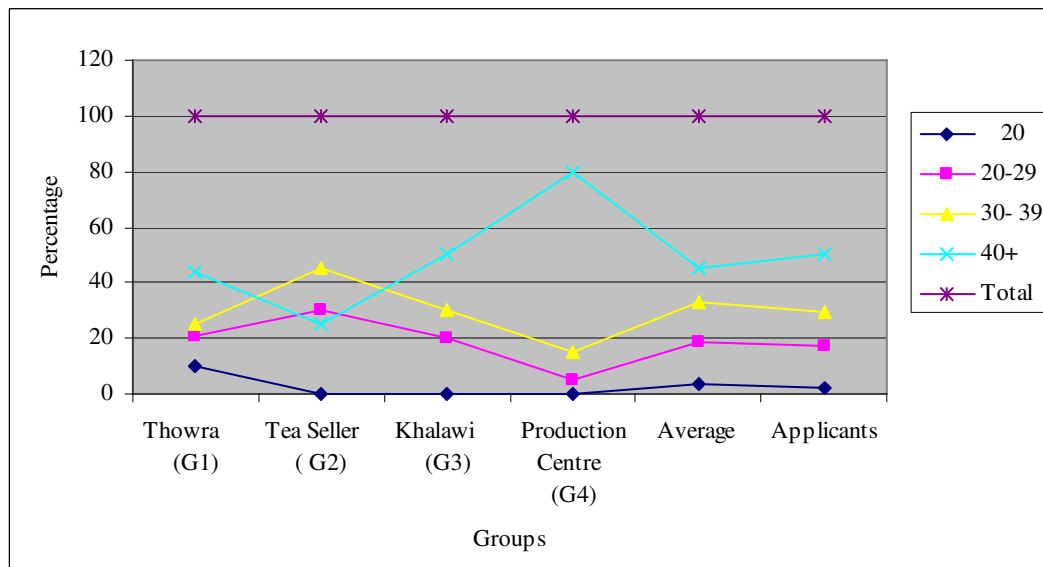
Distribution of Female Entrepreneurs by Age

Variable	Thowra (G1)		Tea Seller (G2)		Khalawi (G3)		Production Centre (G4)		Average %	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Partici pants	Non Participants/ Applicants
20	10	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	3.3	2.5
20-29	21	21	30	30	5	20	1	5	19	17.5
30- 39	25	25	45	45	25	30	3	15	32.7	29.5
40+	44	44	25	25	50	50	16	80	45	50.5
Total	100	100	100	100	80	100	20	100	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.1

Distribution of Female Entrepreneurs by Age



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

It is clear that the age of women is an important determinant of female entrepreneurs' participation. When comparing the female entrepreneurs who participated in the projects with those who applied for funding for an SWGU project (applicants), it is clear that there is no significant difference in the age of the female entrepreneurs and the ages of applicants. In

other words, the participants and the applicants have similar ages. Within the applicant group, older women of age group 40+ years comprise 50.5% of the sample, followed by 29.5% age 30-39 years and only 20% whose age is less than 30.

Within the participant group, 45% of the SWG savings and microcredit projects female entrepreneurs from age group 40+ years represent the largest group, followed by 32.7% from age group 30-39 years, 19 % are from age group 20-29 years and 3.3% are from age group 20 and less than 20 years. Thus, the results indicate that as the average age increases the rate of female labour force participation increases also. It is important to indicate that the age of women is an important determinant of female participation in the labour force. During the time of the study, 80% of the female entrepreneurs of the Milk Production Centre, 50% of the women of Khalawi Education Centre and 44% of Thowra women were older entrepreneurs from age group 40+ years who had achieved the end of their child bearing period. These women tend to be more inclined to work than younger women.

On the other hand, an interesting phenomenon can be observed through comparison of a cross section of the economic activities carried out by the female entrepreneurs of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects. During the time of the study, 75% of the younger female entrepreneurs from the age group 20-39 years who were in the beginning of the family formation or reproductive cycle of their lives were the Tea Sellers. These women still have opportunities to have more children and, as reported by this group, lack opportunities to get jobs. Household responsibilities and hard living conditions forced them to look for an alternative to working in the SWGU projects.

As stated in chapter three these situations really reflect the problems of women in Sudan. The difference can be explained by the respective entrepreneurs' life cycle stages during the study. 44% of Al Thowra and 80% of Kazagail Milk Production Centre women were older female entrepreneurs who had probably ended their child bearing role. In conclusion, Table 8.1 indicates that as the ages of the female entrepreneurs increase their labour participation increases.

Other groups indicate those who were older and who had achieved their desired family size reflect a higher level of involvement in the microcredit and saving projects. The results of the study indicate that among the demographic variables, age is positively correlated with the

involvement of female entrepreneurs in the microcredit projects. Age groups 30-39 and 40+ show significantly more participation in SWGU microcredit projects among all groups. Most of the entrepreneurs in the SWGU microcredit projects come from older age groups because there is emphasis for inclusion of female headed households and widows.

The single women are the poorest of the poor in these groups. Also, it is easy to target the older female entrepreneurs because they are relatively more independent than the younger women and more physically mobile to join the SWGU Microcredit projects activities.

.2.2 Educational level

Table 8.2 and Diagram 8.2 below show that 47.5% of the applicants to the savings and microcredit projects are non-educated. Active economic participation of non-educated women in SWGU savings and microcredit projects in the future can be forecasted. The same trend is clear for the female entrepreneurs of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects. Female entrepreneurs with no education, 42.33%, form the largest group, followed by 32.33% who completed primary/intermediate level of education, then 17% who completed high secondary level. Finally, 8.33% of the female entrepreneurs completed university.

The results of the study indicate that female entrepreneurs' participation in microcredit savings projects has a negative correlation with their education level. That is, the female entrepreneurs' participation in SWGU savings and microcredit projects decreases when their educational level increases.

Across the groups of the female entrepreneurs of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects this correlation is apparent from the records for Group 2, Tea sellers, Group 3, Khalawi, and Group 4, Milk Production Centre. Women with no education and those who have primary are more likely join the SWGU savings and microcredit projects. However, for Group 1, Al Thowra, the picture varies from the other three groups. The greatest number of women attaining higher levels of education is observed among Al Thowra SWGU savings and microcredit projects female entrepreneurs. 36% attained Secondary/ High level of education, followed by 33% who completed primary level of education and 12% who completed university and above. In total, 81% of Group1 were educated women who were able to deal

with financial institutions and choose their work. In other words, educational level among Al Thowra female entrepreneurs is directly associated with their awareness of microfinance institutions like the banks. The need to work with financial institutions and create bank relations influences attitudes towards women's work and raises the awareness about banks and other funding institutions.

The second most educated is Group 3, Khalawi women, where 55% of them are educated. 33.5% of Khalawi women completed primary level of education, 12.5% completed high secondary school and 10% completed university. This target group, who happen to be more educated, prefer to participate in microcredit savings and projects to reduce their vulnerability to the social constraints that reduce female labour participation. Khalawi women play an important role in eradication of female entrepreneurs' illiteracy through religious education.

In Group (2), Tea Sellers, 43% are educated and 57% are non educated female entrepreneurs. This means that these female microcredit entrepreneurs, the youngest group with a lot of responsibilities taking care of children, were involved in tea selling before completion of their education. 7% of the tea sellers completed their high and university education, but due to poverty, lack of job opportunities or lack of jobs with adequate pay, they prefer to work as tea sellers.

Group 4, whose members are traditionally highly professional in milk production, are illiterate. 75% of the group of female entrepreneurs involved in milk production are not educated and only 25% are educated. The existence of educated female entrepreneurs in this group assists illiterate women in spreading technical knowledge about milk production. In conclusion, it is clear that SWGU microcredit and saving projects benefit rural and uneducated female entrepreneurs and also educated urban female entrepreneurs.

Table 8.2

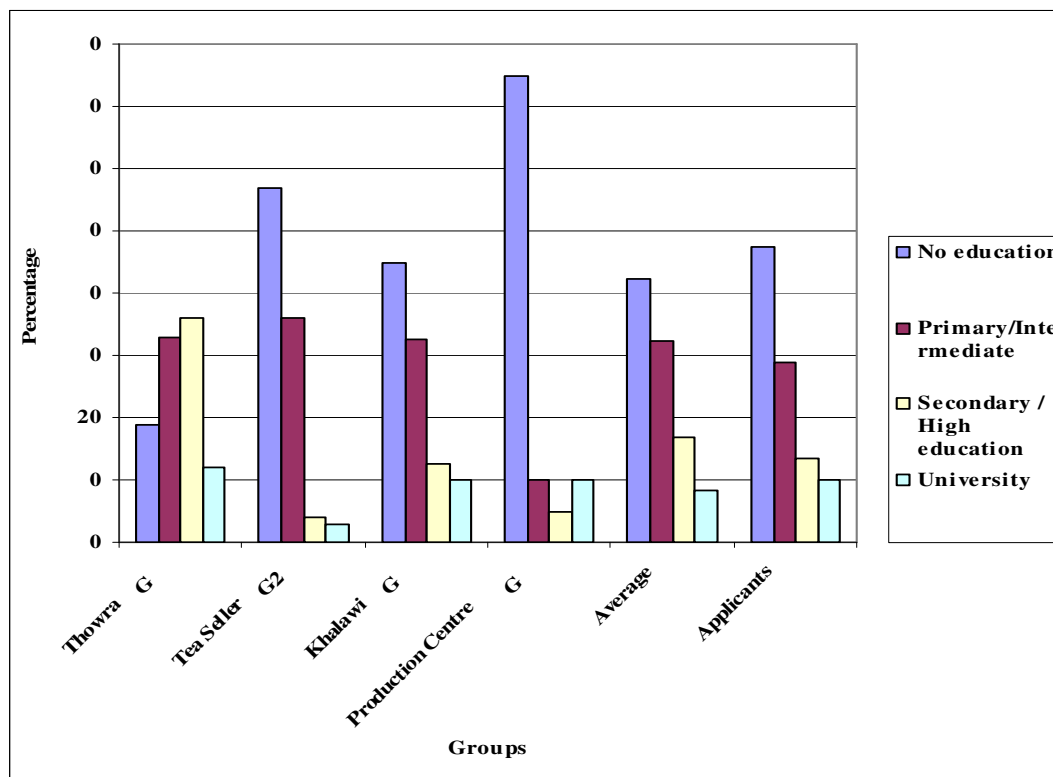
Educational Level of the Female Entrepreneurs

Variable	Thowra (G1)		Tea Sellers (G2)		Khalawi (G3)		Production Centre (G4)		Average %	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Particip- Ants	Non Participants/ Applicants
No educ.	19	19	57	57	36	45	15	75	42.33	47.5
Primary/Intermediate	33	33	36	36	26	32.5	2	10	32.33	29
Secondary /High educ.	36	36	4	4	10	12.5	1	5	17	13.5
Universt+	12	12	3	3	8	10	2	10	8.33	10
Total	100	100	100	100	80	100	20	100	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram: 8.2

Educational Level of the Female Entrepreneurs



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

.2. Marital status

Marital status is expected to influence the level of the participation of female entrepreneurs in the microcredit and saving projects. It is also expected to influence the number of women newly joining the projects (applicants). As shown in Table 8.3 and Diagram 8.3 below, 62.3% of female entrepreneurs involved in SWGU microcredit and saving projects are married. Similarly, 65% of women newly joining the projects (applicants) are married. Unmarried women are organized into single, divorced, widowed and separated categories. Unmarried female entrepreneurs (participants) from these categories total 37.7%. Similarly, a total of 35% of women newly joining the projects (applicants) are unmarried.

Table 8.3

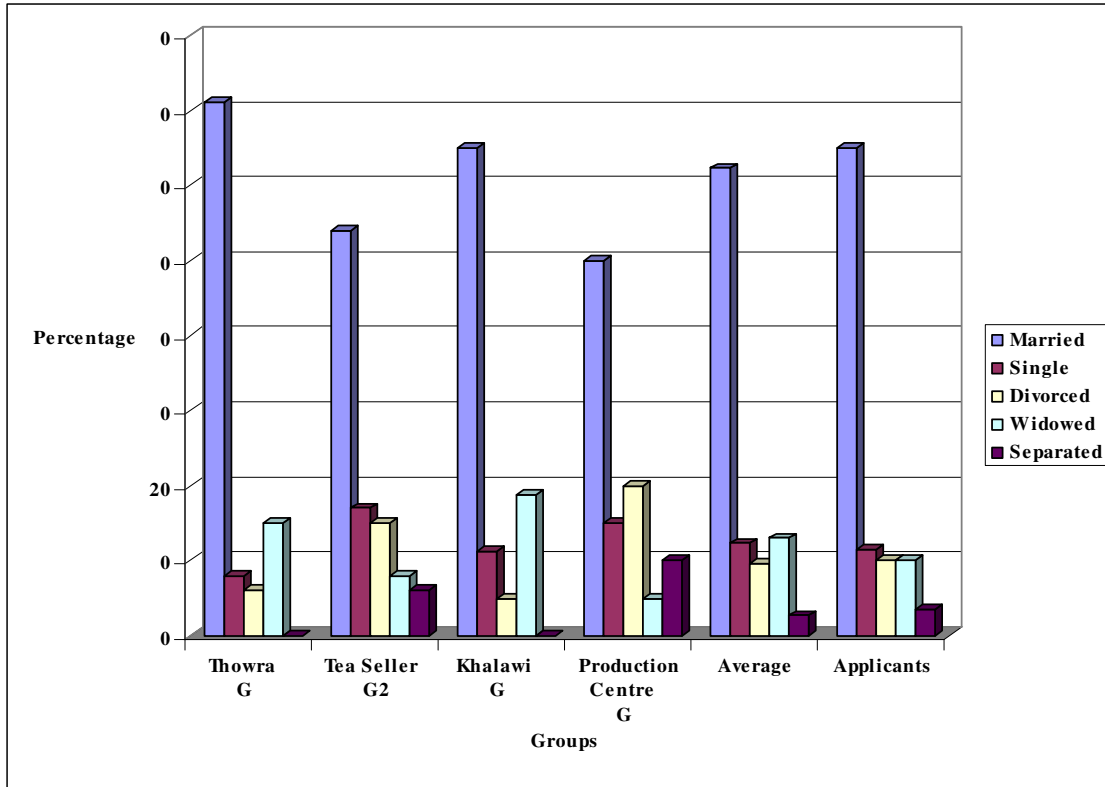
Marital Status of the Female Entrepreneurs

Marital Status	Thowra (G1)		Tea Sellers (G2)		Khalawi (G3)		Production Centre (G4)		Average	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Partici-pants	Non participants/ Applicants
Married	71	71	54	54	52	65	10	50	62.3	65
Single	8	8	17	17	9	11.25	3	15	12.3	11.5
Divorced	6	6	15	15	4	5	4	20	9.7	10
Widowed	15	15	8	8	15	18.75	1	5	13	10
Separated	0	0	6	6	0	0	2	10	2.7	3.5
Total	100	100	100	100	80	100	20	100	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.3

Marital Status of the Female Entrepreneurs



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Due to these facts, the results of the study had found that a large number of female entrepreneurs who participated in SWGU microcredit and savings economic activities are motivated to join the projects due to some external factors such as death of the husbands, divorce, or husband re-marriage, or husband long term's absenteeism or sickness.

The study results have concluded that there is positive correlation between the marriage variable and the participation of female entrepreneurs in SWGU savings and microcredit projects. As reported by the participants and non participants because their husband's income is too low to satisfy household needs, or he has migrated without sending remittances or he is without work. By comparing the total percentages between the participants and applicants groups, similarities in their marital status can be observed.

.2. Parity

Parity is used as a proxy for family obligations and the female entrepreneurs' responsibilities to take care of their children. Table 8.4 and Diagram 8.4 show a positive correlation between the number of children and the number of women, both participants and non participants or the applicants, who are part of the projects. 43.3% of the female entrepreneurs groups had six children and more, followed by 31.3% of female entrepreneurs who had 3-5 children and then 23% of female entrepreneurs who had 1-2 children. Female entrepreneurs who had no children, who are single and some still students, show the lowest level of participation. The result of this study indicates that the number of female entrepreneurs participating in the microcredit projects increases with the number of their children. Most of the children are of schooling age.

Table 8.4 and Diagram 8.4 below show a low rate of participation of female entrepreneurs who have no children for both the Tea Sellers, 4%, who are working in the traditional sector, and Al Thowra group, 3%. This may be due to the fact that most, 40% of the participants are those women working in the traditional sector, where the value of children is greater than their cost as all family members are able to work in the household or the farm. The increasing trend is the result of increasing numbers of the working members of the families, including the children, who help the working women and reduce the burden of their participation in the projects. This is also reflects the Sudanese women problems of having children responsibilities and burden with their household work or the farm. In conclusion, comparing the participants and non participants groups, there is almost no difference in the number of children. Also, there is positive correlation between having 3-5 children and 6+ children and the female entrepreneurs' participation in the SWGU savings and microcredit projects.

Table 8.4

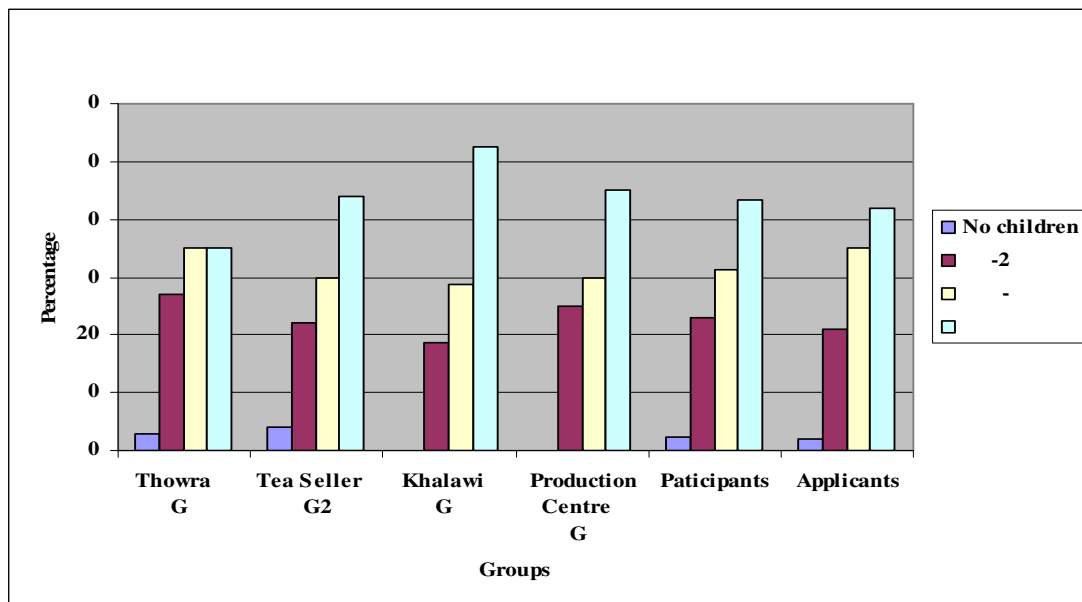
Number of Children

Parity	Thowra (G1)		Tea Sellers (G2)		Khalawi (G3)		Production Centre (G4)		Average	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Partici pants	Non Participants/ Applicants
No. of Children	3	3	4	4	0	0	0	0	23	2
1-2	27	27	22	22	15	18.75	5	25	23	21.1
3-5	35	35	30	30	23	28.75	6	30	31.3	35
6+	35	35	44	44	42	52.5	9	45	43.3	41.9
Total	100	100	100	100	80	100	20	100	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.4

Number of Children



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

.2. Family members

From Table 8.5 and Diagram 8.5 below, it is clear that the largest groups, 40%, for female entrepreneurs who are involved in microcredit projects and 37% for non participant women

who are going to join the projects, have family members consisting of 7 or more. This is followed by 30% of female entrepreneurs with 5-7 household members, and 30% with 1-5 members. Among the non participants who would like to join the projects, 31% have 5-7 family members and 30% have 1-5 family members. The lowest rate of both the female entrepreneurs who have been involved and those who would like to be involved in microcredit projects are almost the same at 30% and 32 % respectively with 1-5 family members.

The results of the study show that there is positive correlation between the family size and the participation of female entrepreneurs in the SWGU savings and microcredit projects. In other words, participation of women in microcredit and saving projects corresponds with the increasing number of household members. This is because 70% of the female entrepreneurs have big families consisting of five to seven and above, members who have many and various needs and demands that need to be satisfied as mentioned before women in Sudan are encountered such problems .Such needs and demands will be explained below when detailing the impact of the savings and microcredit projects.

Table 8.5

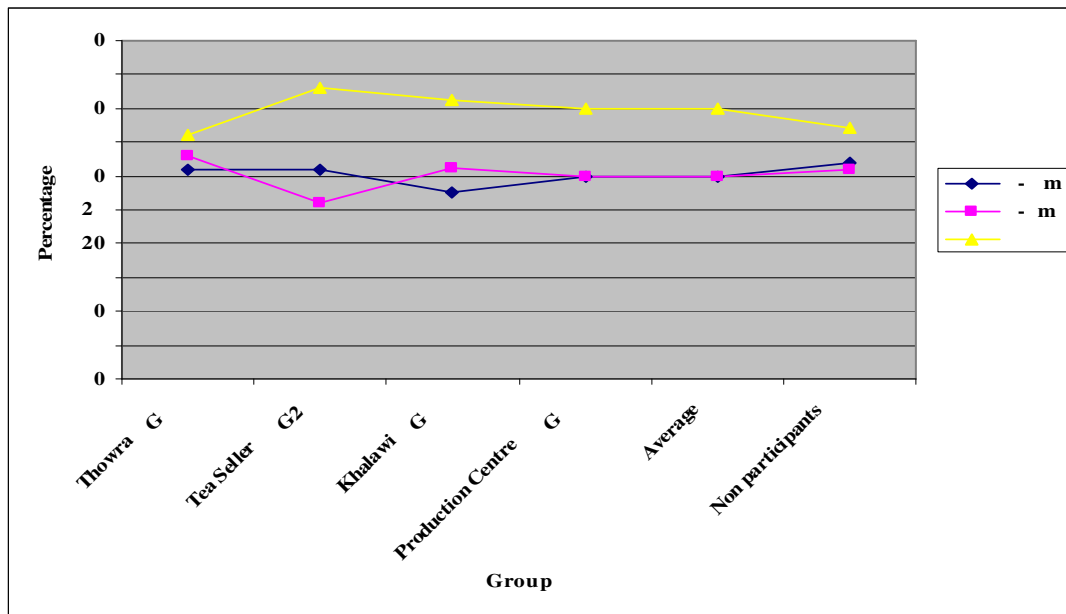
Female Entrepreneurs' Family Members

Variable	Thowra (G1)		Tea Seller s (G2)		Khalawi (G3)		Production Centre (G4)		Average	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Partici pants	Non participants/ Applicants
1-5 m	31	31	31	31	22	27.5	6	30	30	32
5-7m	33	33	26	26	25	31.25	6	30	30	31
7 +	36	36	43	43	33	41.25	8	40	40	37
Total	100	100	100	100	80	100	20	100	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.5

Percentage of Female Entrepreneurs Family Members



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

.2. Household assets

Female entrepreneurs have reported data on the type of assets which they or their households possess and durable goods belonging to their households. A sample of household possessions, include houses, private cars, bicycles, refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners, sewing machines, cookers, television sets, video machines, radios, animals and gold.

As for durable goods, a radio is probably the least expensive. It is an item owned by 81.7% of the households, especially Khalawi, 98%, Tea Sellers, 90%, and Milk Production Centre, 85%, located in urban areas. The radio is possessed by 60% of the Thowra entrepreneurs' households located in semi-urban areas. Ownership of other assets, including TVs, is possessed by 43.3%, with similar concentration at all areas, 41% - 10% production centre. Other assets, like refrigerators, were recorded as the third most commonly owned valuable assets, 30%, which are owned by three groups at Omdurman semi-urban and rural areas and not owned in rural areas like Northern Kordufan.

Other valuable assets, like cars, are owned by only 6% of Thowra entrepreneurs' households. The most valued personal possession is gold, which is owned by almost all entrepreneurs and is highest among Khalawi entrepreneurs, 75%, Tea sellers, 45%, Thowra, 40%, and a lower percentage of ownership, 25%, among Northern Kordufan entrepreneurs.

The second most valued asset for entrepreneurs is ownership of animals, which is highly possessed by Northern Kordufan entrepreneurs, 100%, and rarely owned by Khalawi, 12.5%, Tea Sellers, 3%, and Thowra, 2%, entrepreneurs from rural and semi-urban areas in Omdurman state.

These assets ownership reflected the same problem facing women in Sudan which is the lack of assets and lack of property owned and controlled by the women themselves. Some individual households, having suffered dramatic relative shrinkage of their income that qualifies them to be considered poor on current income-expenditure criteria, might still retain elements of previously acquired wealth. On the other hand, liquidation of assets has been one of the main coping mechanisms . See Table 8.6 and Diagrams 8.6 below:

Table 8.6

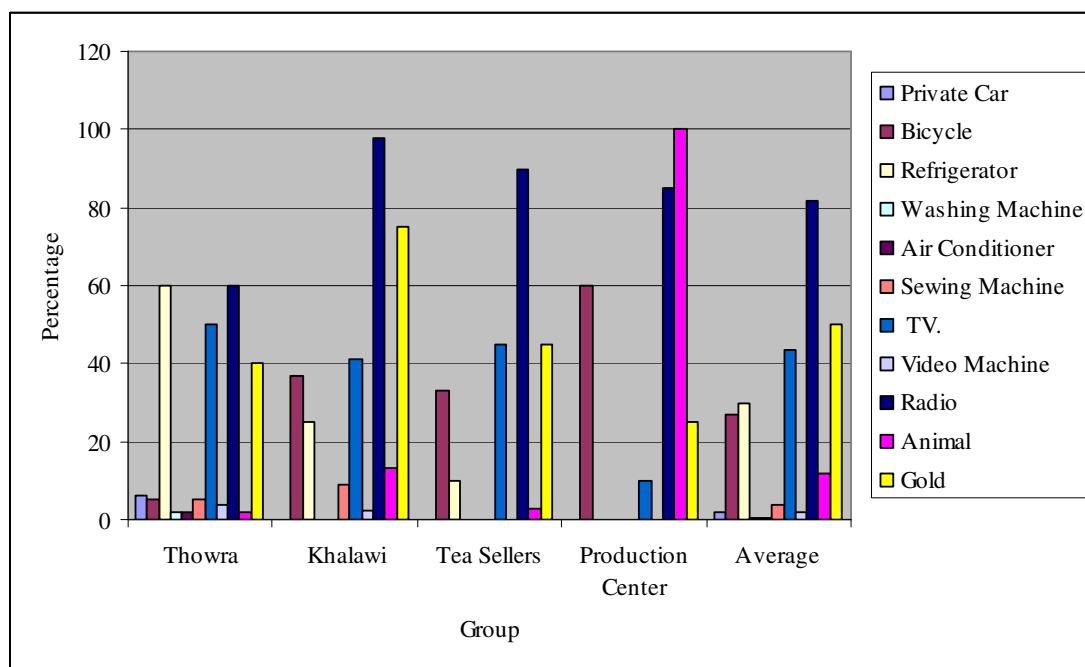
Ownership of Assets for Entrepreneurs' Households

Assets	Ownership of Assets																	
	Thowra (Yes)		Thowra (No)		Khalawi (Yes)		Khalawi (No)		Tea Sellers (Yes)		Tea Sellers (No)		Prod. Center (Yes)		Prod Center (No)		Average	
	No.	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Y	N
Private Car	6	6	94	94	0	0	80	100	0	0	100	100	0	0	20	100	2	98
Bicycle	5	5	95	95	30	37	50	63	33	33	67	67	12	60	8	40	26.7	73.3
Refrigerator	60	60	40	40	20	25	60	75	10	10	90	90	0	0	20	100	30	70
Washing Machine	2	2	98	98	0	0	80	100	0	0	100	100	0	0	20	100	0.7	99.3
Air Conditioner	2	2	98	98	0	0	80	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	100	0.7	99.3
Sewing Machine	5	5	95	95	7	8.8	73	91	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	100	4	96
TV.	50	50	50	50	33	41	47	59	45	45	55	55	2	10	18	90	43.3	56.7
Video Machine	4	4	96	96	2	2.5	78	98	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	100	2	98
Radio	60	60	40	40	78	98	12	15	90	90	10	10	17	85	3	15	81.7	18.3
Animal	2	2	98	98	10	13	70	88	3	3	97	97	20	100	0	0	11.7	88.3
Gold	40	40	60	60	60	75	20	15	45	45	55	55	5	25	15	75	50	50

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.6

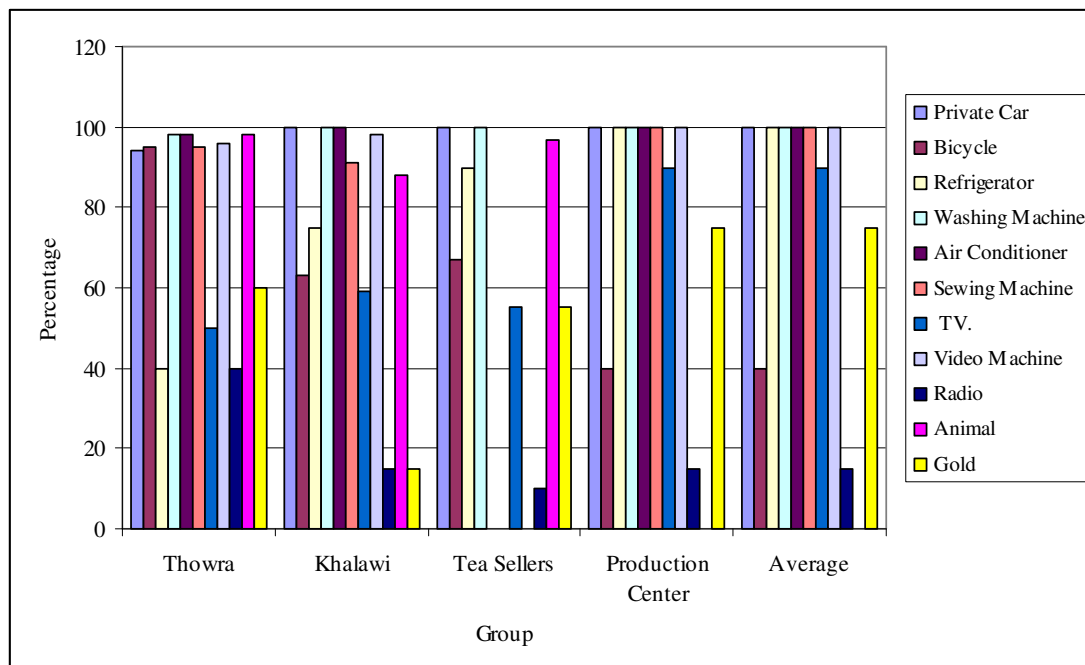
Percentage Distribution of Households Ownership of Assets



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.7

Percentage Distribution of Households without Assets



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

It is observed that 50% of the entrepreneurs' households in Thowra, semi-urban area of Omdurman, own houses, which are, by far, the most expensive type of accommodation. 25% rented apartments and 30% owned shared houses. 50% of Khalawi – of Fitahab entrepreneurs' households, at a rural area of Omdurman, own houses. 25% of Khalawi entrepreneurs rent houses and 25% rent shared houses. For Tea Sellers entrepreneurs' households in Ombadah-Rural Omdurman areas, 20% own apartments, 30% rent apartments, and 50% rent shared houses. 100% of the female entrepreneurs in Northern Kordufan-Kazagil rural areas owned cottages as the cottage is the most commonly used type of accommodation. See Table 8.7 below:

Table 8.7

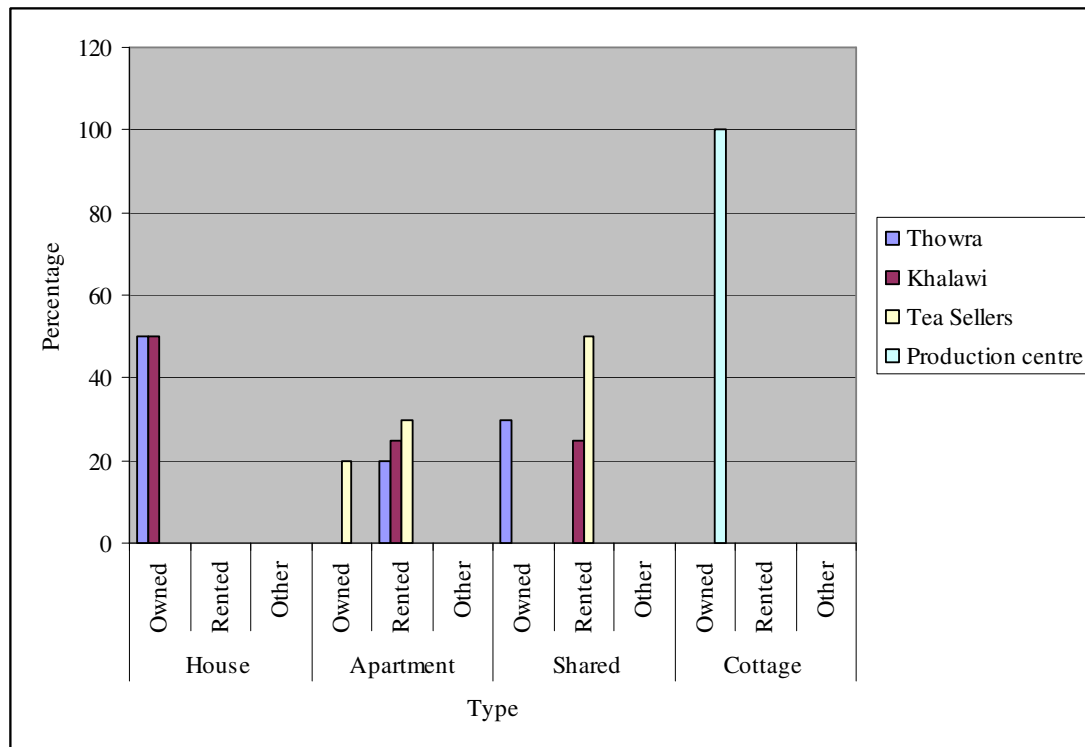
Percentage Distribution of Households According to
Type of Accommodation and Type of Holding

Type of Holding	House			Apartment			Shared			Cottage			Total/ %
	Owned	Rented	Other	Owned	Rented	Other	Owned	Rented	Other	Owned	Rented	Other	
Thowra	50				20		30						100
%	50				20		30						100%
Khalawi	40				20			20					80
%	50				25			25					100%
Tea Sellers				20	30								100
%				20	30								100%
Production centre										20			20
%										100			00%

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.8

Percentage Distribution of Households According to Type of Accommodation and Type of Holding



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

.2. Household water and electricity

42.7% of the female entrepreneurs reported that they did not have difficulties getting access to safe drinking water while 57.3 % of the female entrepreneurs indicated that access to safe water is one of their households' basic human needs. Sources of water for households include inside taps, outside taps, mobile water tanks and deep wells. From Table 8.8 and Diagram 8.9 below it is observed that inside water taps constitute the source of water for 42.7% of entrepreneurs' households in Omdurman specifically, 80% for Thowra entrepreneurs, 30% for tea sellers and 22.5% for Khalawi women at Omdurman rural areas. When outside taps are included, this percentage increases to 63% (20.3% for outside tap in Omdurman rural areas). 30.3% use Mobile Tank and 5% of entrepreneurs' households obtain water from deep wells. 1.7% obtain water from other sources, represented by Northern Kordufan rural areas. See the Table 8.8 below.

Table 8.8

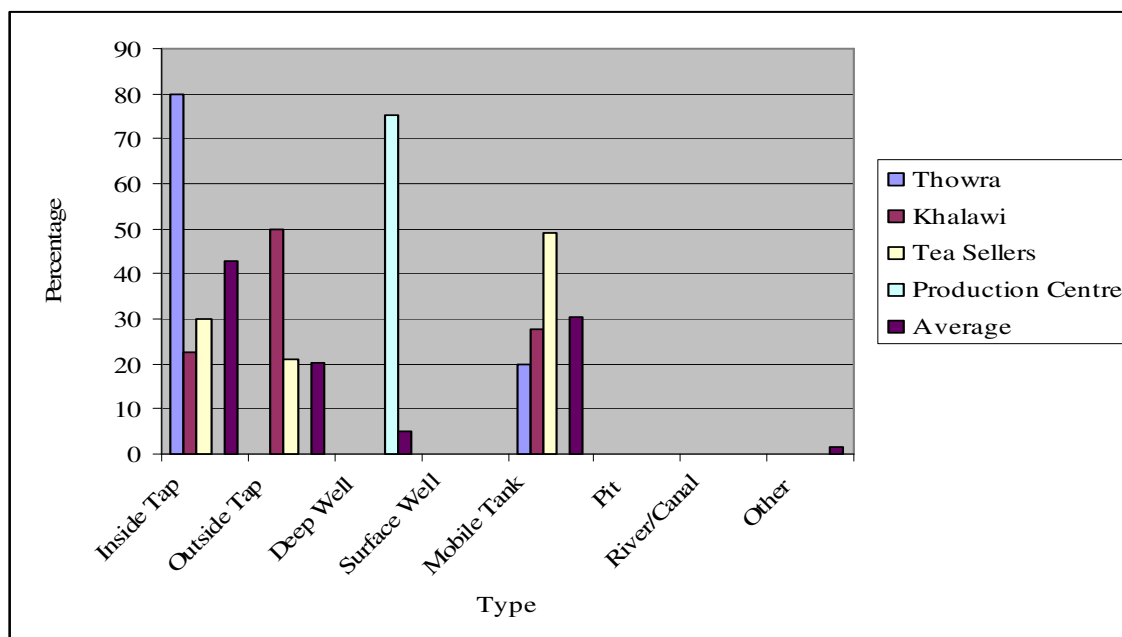
Percentage Distribution of Households
According to Source of Water

Source of Water	Thowra		Khalawi		Tea Sellers		Production Centre		Average
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Inside Tap	80	80	18	22.5	30	30			42.7
Outside Tap			40	50	21	21			20.3
Deep Well							15	75	5
Surface Well									0
Mobile Tank	20	20	22	27.5	49	49			30.3
Pit									0
River/Canal									0
Other							5	25	1.7
Total	100	100	80	100	100	100	20	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.9

Percentage Distribution of Households
According to Source of Water



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Electricity constitutes the source of lighting for 55% of entrepreneurs' households, of which 70% live in Thowra semi-urban areas, 81.2% for Khalawi - Fitahab and 30% for Tea Sellers and Ombadah rural areas respectively. While kerosene is the source of lighting for 45% of entrepreneurs' households at both Omdurman and Kordufan rural areas of which 30% is used by Thowra, 18.8 at Khalawi-Fitahab, and 70% by Tea Sellers at Ombadah rural areas and 100% at Milk Production Centre, Northern Kordufan rural areas. See Table (8.9) below.

Table 8.9

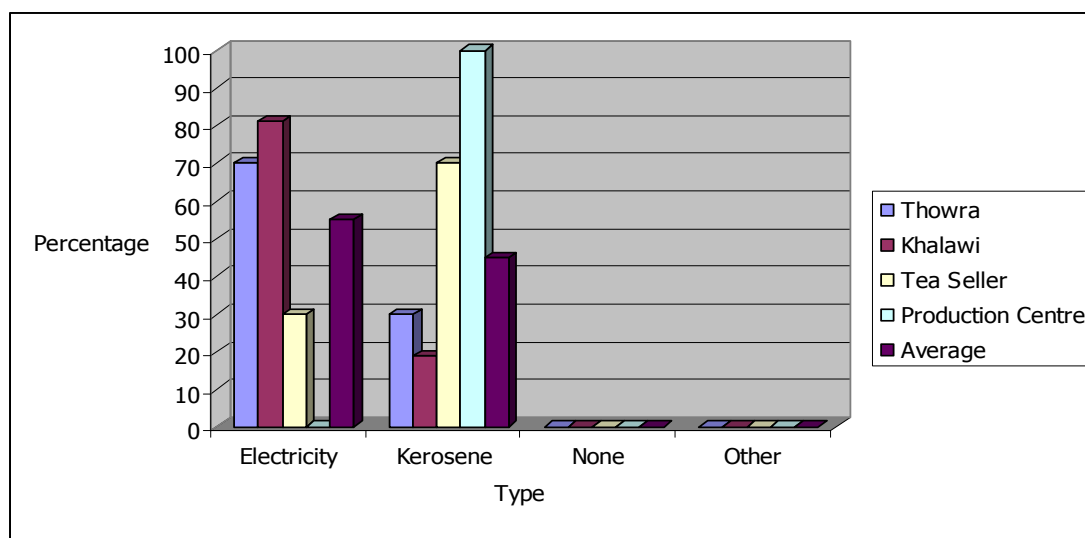
Distribution Percentage of Households
According to Source of Electricity

Source of Lighting	Thowra		Khalawi		Tea Sellers		Production Centre		Average
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Electricity	70	70	65	81.2	30	30	0	0	55
Kerosene	30	30	15	18.8	70	70	20	100	45
None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	100	100	80	100	100	100	20	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram No 8.10

Distribution Percentage of Households
According to Source of Electricity



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

• **Economic impacts: at the production/ project level**

• • **Uses of the loans**

Table 8.10

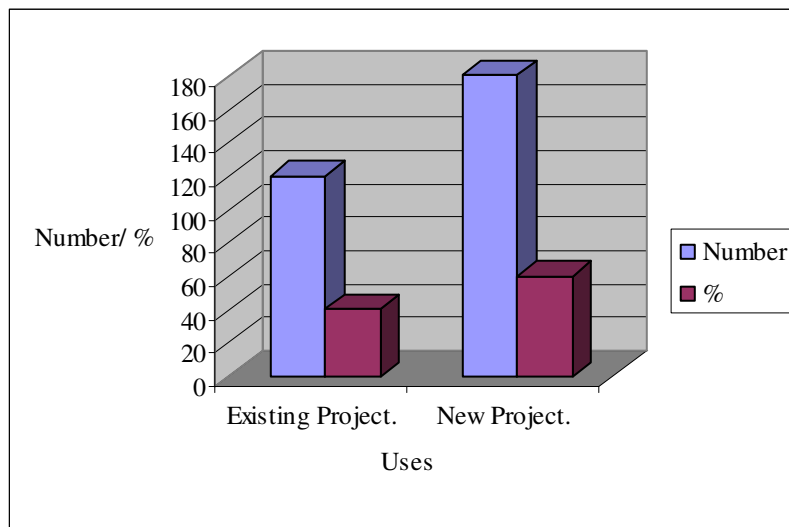
Uses of the Loan

Uses	%	Number
Existing Project.	40	120
New Project.	60	180

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.11

Uses of the Loan



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

SWGU savings and microcredit projects bring focus to the poor female entrepreneurs and highlight a useful tool to help them move out of poverty. The poor female entrepreneurs are not poor because they cannot manage their money; they are not poor because their business activities are not profitable, they are poor because their resource base is too small. Simply speaking they have too little capital, too little money and assets. However, due to the savings and microcredit projects, 60% of the entrepreneurs reported that they used the loans to establish new projects. Because these families are poor and do not have permanent sources of income and they lack money to meet the daily live expenses, the main objective of the savings and microcredit projects for these women is to increase household income and diversify

household sources of income. 40% of the entrepreneurs have reported that the loans were used in the running of existing savings and microcredit projects. Usually these projects are household projects that stopped functioning because of lack of operational funds. Women apply for the loan to operate and expand their existing projects to increase production and consequently increase income.

Female entrepreneurs of Milk Production Centre in Kazagail, Kordufan perceive themselves as poor families because of crisis. As their communities suffer from drought and conflict and without savings, insurance and access to loans to draw upon, they are forced to draw down on their working capital. Poverty caused them to sell their cows and camels and leave their agricultural work, thus decimating their future income. Provision of financial services alone cannot solve these serious problems, but they can help to alleviate some of the devastating effects.

All these problems mentioned by the female entrepreneurs are reflecting the same problems of women in Sudan indicated in chapter three and can be summaries in lack of money or income and assets.

. .2 Increase in income

Table 8.11

Use of the Loan for its

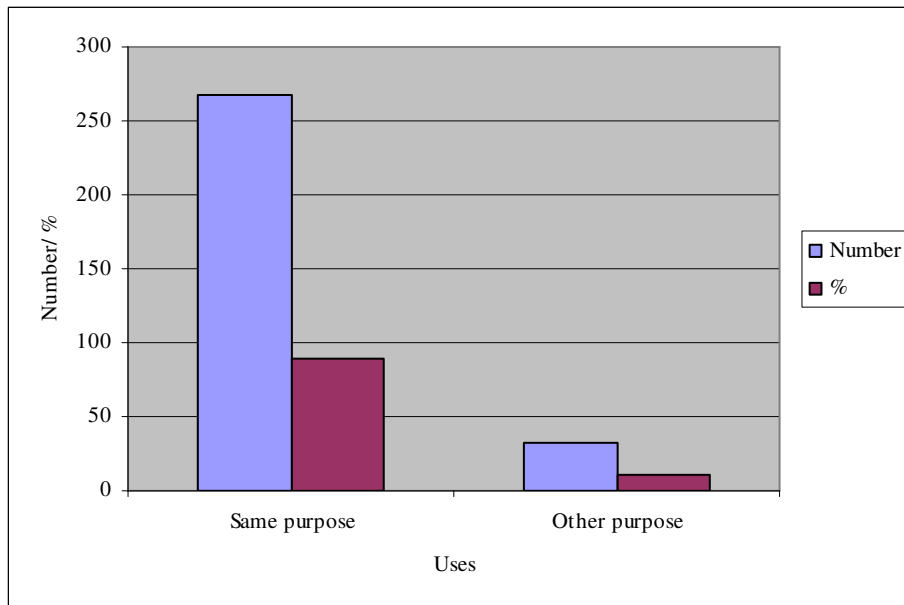
Intended Purpose

Purpose	%	Number
Same purpose	89.3	268
Other purpose	10.7	32

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.12

Use of the Loan for its Intended Purpose



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Table 8.11 and Diagram 8.12 above indicate that 89.3% of entrepreneurs used the loan for its intended purpose while 10.7% of the entrepreneurs indicated that the loan had been used for another purpose. These are poor women who find themselves in a position to sell the means of production owned by the project in order to meet the demands of the daily life. Most areas of consumption are health, education and other daily living expenditures.

. . . Increase of production of the existing projects

Table 8.12

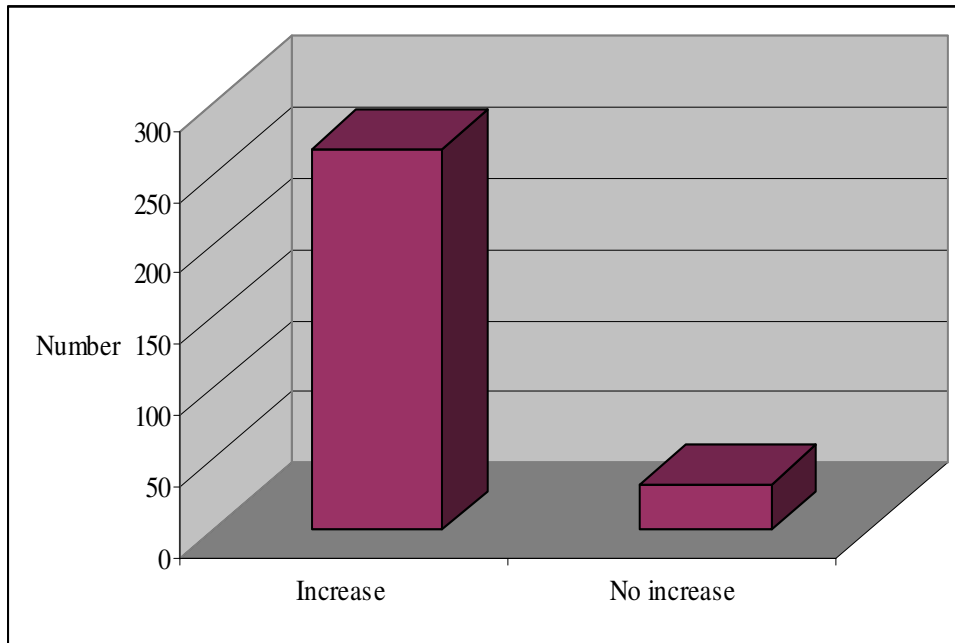
Increase in Production

Increase in Production	%	Number
Increase	89.3	268
No increase	10.7	32

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.13

Increase in Production



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

It is clear that from the Table 8.12 above that 89.3% of the women beneficiaries indicated that after using the loan the production of their projects increased. The income from the selling of the product was used for the expansion and diversification of the project by developing a new product. 10.7% said that there was no increase in production after using loan.

. . Profit gained from the projects

Table 8.13

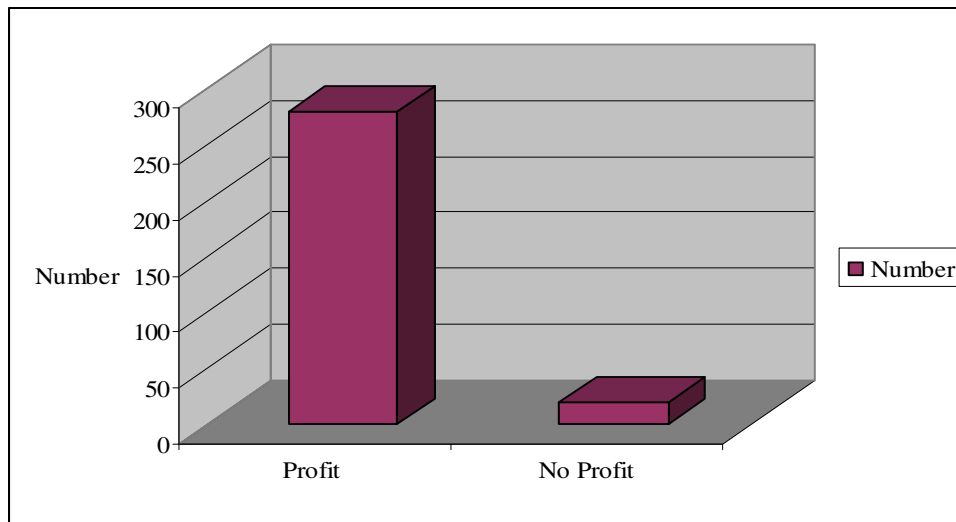
Gaining of Profit

State of profit	%	Number
Profit	93.3	280
No Profit	6.7	20

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.14

Gaining of Profit



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

93.3% of the entrepreneurs indicated that their projects were successful and profit from the projects' income was estimated to be between 500 to 1500 dinar/day. This assisted the women entrepreneurs in paying the loan instalments on a regular basis. Timely payment indicates that the entrepreneurs devoted a lot of effort to reach necessary output. These projects are small scale enterprises, either in the size of their funding or in their structures. Therefore, at any time they might collapse if exposed to economic factors like price increases for the projects' inputs or economic fluctuations or environmental causes like reduced rainfall or drought. Due to these conditions, one can say the degree of risk for these projects is high.

There are many constraints, including lack of raw materials and lack of marketing facilities. 40% of the Milk Production Centre producers found difficulty in marketing their cheese to merchants and finding new channels of marketing locally. 20% of Milk Production Centre producers reported difficulty in finding adequate raw materials.

The results of the study have indicated that at the production level, SWGU savings and microcredit projects for female entrepreneurs enable them to:

1. Introduce new technology. This is both an answer and a curse for rural poverty alleviation in Sudan. It opens new doors of opportunity for advancing the process of cheese making and new ideas for dry yogurt making at Kazagail Milk Production

Centre. Financial inputs took the form of a mobile shelved table for vegetable selling, mobile shelved table with gas cylinder, shading umbrella and other utensils for tea sellers. Advances in technology are bypassing many rural poor households since they lack the financial and educational capacity to take advantage of such rapid changes. This, in turn, limits production and marketing competitiveness, and hence pushes families out of their livelihoods. Public and private investment in this area is important to improve the opportunities for rural communities.

2. Reduce marketing costs by opening new channels for entrepreneurs' products through the economic and production centres at 6 states and main marketing centre at Khartoum. This enables the entrepreneurs to get greater access to marketing facilities.
3. Enable the entrepreneurs to bridge the pre- and post-harvest funding gaps to avoid having to sell immediately following harvest at lower prices, especially agro-industries such as food processing and storage of cheese, dry yogurt, butter making, salted, dried fish, meat, and vegetables. On the other hand, this put pressure on entrepreneurs to pay their monthly loan regularly.
4. Smooth seasonal income flows through deposit facilities and mainly Sandoq fund, possession of gold and access to remittances mitigate microcredit risks and ensure against price or yield fluctuations.
5. Access loans. However, inequality in loan mode accessibility, mainly Gard Hassan (as grant from Zakat Fund) for 30% of the entrepreneurs at production centres (Kazagail). The other 70% of the entrepreneurs get access to loans with interest though banks. This unequal modes of finance created tension between the microcreditors which might lead them not to pay their instalments and to shift to Gard Hassan .

. . **Contribution to the household income**

Increasing women's income levels and control over income leads to greater levels of economic independence. An indirect effect of women's increased cash earnings is believed to be an enhancement of women's bargaining power within the household. Women have different spending preferences than men and place greater value on nutrition and children's clothes, food/education/health care/etc. It is believed an increase in women's intra-household bargaining power could have an impact on total household spending greater than the specific amount of her increased earnings. Respondents in all the groups were asked to rank their relative contribution to their households' total income before and after the projects. Before the projects, 26% of the non participants (women about to join the projects) reported either they earned no income or that it was only small portion of their total household income. After the projects, only 9.3% of the participants gave this response.

Table 8.14

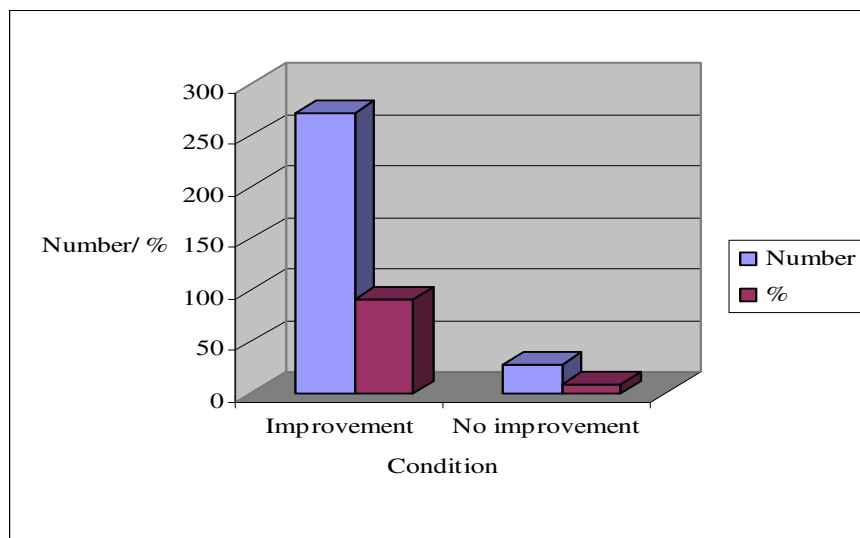
Improvement of the Family Income

Condition	%	Number
Improvement	90.7	272
No improvement	9.3	28

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.15

Improvement of the Family Income



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.15 above shows that 90.7% of the entrepreneurs indicated that the family income was increased and thus family conditions had improved due to the microcredit projects. This is one of the women's motivations to join the projects as well as the objective of the SWGU microcredit projects and the poverty reduction programme. 9.3% reported that there was no improvement in family conditions because most of the projects face constraints at the beginning. Entrepreneurs must spend more on raw materials and the income is spent on daily life needs.

. . . **Household expenditures**

The impact of the savings and microcredit projects can be explained in enhancing perceptions of female entrepreneurs' contribution to household income and family welfare, increasing women's participation in household decisions about expenditures and other issues and leading to greater expenditures on women's welfare.

This impact is also associated with risks that female entrepreneurs have experienced, increasing fears that women's small increases in income are leading to a decrease in male contributions to certain types of household expenditures, like buying clothes and school stationery for young students and medical treatments. When female entrepreneurs have set up enterprises, this has often led to small increases in access to income at the cost of heavier workloads and repayment pressures. Female entrepreneurs have employed their daughters and daughters-in-law as unpaid family labourers, increasing their workload.

Women were asked to report how much of their own money they had spent on several types of common household expenditures. Their responses were analyzed both in terms of mean amounts spent on each type of and also the prevalence of women who spent money they had earned on that type.

Table 8.15

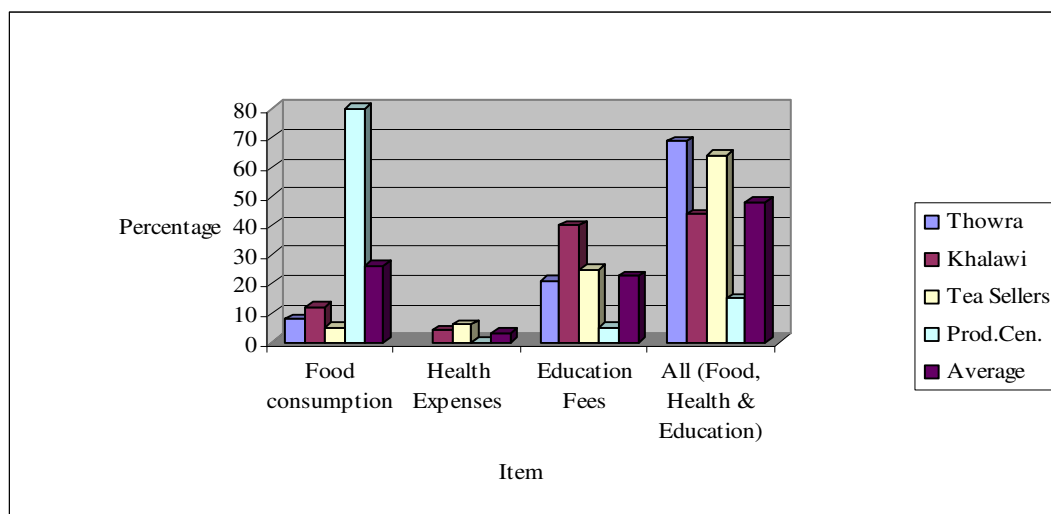
Household Expenditures

Item	Thowra		Khalawi		Tea Sellers		Production Centre (G4)		Average
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
Food consumption	8	8	12	12	4	5	16	80	26.3
Health Expenses	2	2	4	4	5	6	0	0	3
Education Fees	21	21	40	40	20	25	1	5	22.7
All (Food, Health and Education)	69	69	44	44	51	64	3	15	48
Total	100	100	100	100	80	100	20	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.16

Household Expenditures



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Numbers of female entrepreneurs served and the amount of loans (debt) they have is not the real goal. What is important is the effect microcredit has on the household members and the community. Diagram 8.16 above shows that 48% of the entrepreneurs consumed the income they gained from the microcredit projects on daily basic needs, mainly for family food provision, fees for education of their children and medical treatment. The high consumption of the income is on food as reported by 26.3% of the entrepreneurs, followed by paying educational fees as reported by 22.7% of the entrepreneurs and, finally, paying expenditures

for health reported by 3% of the entrepreneurs. These results indicate that the first priority is satisfaction of the need for food, then the satisfaction of the need for education and, finally, the need for health care. These households are poor and women bear the responsibility for provision of food, education and healthcare with low income to satisfy these needs.

. . .2 Food expenditure

Classification of these sectors or basic needs by groups and location indicated that on food sector 80% of the Kordufani female microcredit projects who are depend on their subsistence food from Jabarik cultivation and animal husbandry they are highly concerned about the satisfaction of the family needs for food. Although they are growing vegetables, crops and raise some animal mainly goat and chicken, but the production is not sufficient enough to feed the family members all the year especially on dry seasons because these are rain fed agriculture production. And insufficiency of rain constrained the increase in agriculture production in addition to the limited access to the land around the house. This microcredit female entrepreneurs group is followed by Khartoumi female entrepreneurs from Khalawi women 12%, Thowra female entrepreneurs 8% and finally tea sellers 5% are also concerned by the issue of food and spend in this area.

Table 8.16 below was prepared with female entrepreneurs' input during the participatory group discussions in Omdurman and Obied: Kazagil. It was found that there is variation on the prices of goods between Omdurman and Obied, like meat is cheaper in Obied than Omdurman since Obied is one of the biggest markets for sheep and cattle. Sugar and tea are expensive in Obied since these are brought from Khartoum/Omdurman.

Table 8.16

Food Item Consumption and Average Expenditure per Day

Meal	Food item	Quantity of raw food (grams)	Price/ gram	Cost (Dinar)	Beneficiaries		Non-beneficiaries	
					Total Cost		Total Cost	
					Omdurman	Kazagail	Omdurman	Kazagail
Morning and After noon	Milk	30	0.87	26.1	26.1			
	Sugar	30	1.74	52.2	52.2	52.2		52.2
Tea	Tea	3	3.91	11.74	11.74	11.74		11.74
Total				90.4	90.4	63.94	90.4	63.94
Breakfast	Horse beans/ Fulmassri	150	3	450				
	Bread	150	1	150				
	Oil	5	2.17	10.9		10.9		
Total				610.9	610.9	10.9		
Lunch (Obied) (Tabiekh and Umrigiega)	Salt	1.56	0.22	0.34		0.34		
	Vegetable/Okra	63.96	1	63.96				
	Meat/ Fish	14.84	3	44.52		44.52		
	Onion	19.08	0.4	7.63				
	Salad/Tomato	31.16	0.75	53.13				
	Kissra	330	0.4	132				
	Total			301.58		44.86		
Lunch (Motorman) (Tabiekh Umrigiega)	Meat/ Fish	36.68	6	110.04				
	Onion	47.16	0.8	18.89				
	Oil	10.92	2.7	23.74				
	Vegetable/Okra	67.14	1.33	65.02				
	Salt	1.56	0.22	0.34				
	Salad/Tomato	31.16	0.75	53.13				
	Bread	100	1	100				
	Total			463.16	463.2			
Dinner	Horse beans/ Fulmassri	150	3	450				
	Bread	150	1	150				
	Oil	5	2.17	10.9		10.9		
Total				610.9	610.9	10.9		
	Gas / wood			50	50	30.0		
Total					1825.36 (7.3US)	160.6 (0.64 US)		
% Household food expenditures paid for by women's income					68%		47%	

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

In this study, the average prices have been taken to estimate expenditures on food. However, great variation has been found in the pattern of consumption between the entrepreneurs from

Obied/Northern Kordufan and Omdurman. The study results indicate that Northern Kordufani female entrepreneurs depend totally on food grown in Jabarik and milk of the animals they raise on their farms. Non-farm households from Omdurman depend on purchased food items bought from the market. Table 8.16 above shows the food items and the total cost per day for each poor household.

Omdurman female entrepreneurs need 1825.36 SD, equal to US 7.30 (US rate: one US equal to 250 SD) for food consumption per day while female entrepreneurs in rural Obied – Kazagil need 160.6 SD equal to US 0.64 per day for food consumption. This wide gap in food consumption indicates that Kazagil women are more economic in their way of food expenditure than Omdurmani female entrepreneurs. By comparing the total costs, Omdurmani women spend more than that of Kazagil women with a difference equal to 1664.76 SD or 6.6. By subtracting the costs of food items cultivated by Jabarik it is found that the savings from the three meals by Kazagil female entrepreneurs is equal to 1502.82 SD equal to US 6.00 (lunch: 256.72 SD, Breakfast: 600 dinar, Dinner: 600 SD and morning tea: 26.1 SD and wood: 20 SD).

Table 8.17

Contribution of Female Entrepreneurs to the Household Food

Expenditure between Beneficiaries – Non- Beneficiaries

Food Item	Beneficiaries		Non-beneficiaries	
Bread	400	(1.6)	450	(1.8)
Kissra (Sorghum Pancake)	224	(.89)	300	(1.2)
Horse beans/ Fulmassri	900	(3.6)	960	(3.84)
Meat/ Fish	110.04	(0.44)	142.8	(0.57)
Sugar, tea, milk, oil , Charcoal or Gas	90.4	(0.36)	450	(1.8)
Gas /Wood	50	(0.2)	50	(0.2)
Total	1774.44	(7.09)	3353	(13.4)
% HH's food expenditures paid for by women's income	68%		47%	

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

The Table 8.17 above summaries the household food expenditure information gathered during the group in-depth interviewees from both beneficiaries and non beneficiaries groups. Respondents were asked to estimate the household expenditure on many types of food. These estimates have been converted from Sudanese SD to U.S dollars, and to obtain per capita amounts, divided by the number of persons in the family (counting an adult as one and a dependent under 17 years of age as 0.75. in the food categories , there was no much differences in the amount spent across the two groups.

In fact, the non beneficiaries showed the most dramatic increases in per capita food expenditure as compared to beneficiaries group. Also there was a significant and positive difference in the per capita amount spent on Sorghum and bread by non beneficiaries. Non beneficiaries also had a significant and positive difference of amount of money spent for vegetable and beans and meat versus participants.

Worth noting is the fact that a great majority of the households (30 – 10%) included in the survey are Jabarik farming households that provide a significant portion of their own food consumption than greater dependency on purchased food.

There was some indication of substitution of responsibility for food purchase within the beneficiaries' households, which might undermine the programme's impact on the household food expenditures. 45% to 51% of the total household food expenditure of the non beneficiaries was paid from the income women had earned or get from husband and controlled by women. For the beneficiaries there was an increase up to 60% among the beneficiary's households. When controlling for marital status, this increase is not significantly important. It is possible that as beneficiaries earned more profit from their loan assisted activities, husbands and other members of the household contributed less money for food purchase. It is not within the scope of this study to determine what indirect effect the programme might have had on total household expenditures, if indeed participants' earnings freed up income earned by other members of the participant households.

Table 8.17 summarises that: there is significant difference in sorghum expenditures between beneficiaries and non beneficiaries.

- There is significant difference in bread and vegetable expenditures between the participants and non participants
- There is significant difference in meat expenditures between the participants and non participants
- There is significant difference in cooked food (Foul massri) expenditures between the participants and non participants but same expenditures.
- There is marginally significant difference in food expenditures between the participants and the non participants
- There is non significant difference in Sugar, tea, milk, oil, Charcoal or Gas expenditures between the participants and non participants
- There is marginally significant difference in women's contribution to total per capita food expenditures between beneficiaries and non beneficiaries.

• **Social impact: female entrepreneurs and decision making**

• • **Contribution of the female entrepreneurs to education**

As reported before in Table 8.15 Household Expenditures, with regard to education, 40 % Khalawi female entrepreneurs target groups consume more than the rest of the target group followed by 25% of the Tea Sellers female entrepreneurs and then 21% of Al Thowra female entrepreneurs. Only 5% of the Kordufani female entrepreneurs of the production centre spent income from microcredit on educational fees.

However, the study indicated that school drop out and absenteeism is serious problems. Household expenditure on education include: contributions to the rehabilitation of school facilities or new buildings, buying most of the education material including exercises books, pencils, mathematic and art materials and other stationeries. All these affected the academic attainment and educational efficiency of the children. From the group discussions with all female entrepreneurs it seems that vast majority of the school population is extremely poor.

According to the female entrepreneurs there is now a huge competition for sending children to private schools and paying for qualified trained teachers to give afternoon lessons. This phenomenon of sending children to private school rather than to government schools and

looking for private teachers has been considered a measurement of wellbeing of the household, indicating a state of wealth. These facts have been supported by the literature which indicates that the percentage of trained teachers in northern Sudan, which was 75% in 1991, dropped to 68% in 1996 and to 54.7% in 1999.

Female entrepreneurs were asked to report how much of their own money they had spent on several types of common household expenditure. Their responses were analyzed both in terms of mean amounts spent on each type and also the prevalence of female entrepreneurs who spent money they had earned on that type.

A greater percentage of beneficiaries reported spending their own money on school fees and payments for health care expenses in the last year than the non beneficiaries groups. See Table 8.18 below.

Table 8.18

Female Entrepreneur's Spending on School Fees and
Materials in the Last 12 Month

	Beneficiaries	Non beneficiaries
Percentage of Female entrepreneurs spending their own money	54%	30%
Mean of the amount spent	2500 (10)	2125 (8.5)

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

There was no significant difference between the two groups in the percentage of women spending their own money and the mean of the amount spent. 54% of the female entrepreneurs spend their own money amounting to an average of 2500 (10).

However as shown in Table 8.4 Number of Children, participants had a greater number of living children. When controlling for the number of children, there was no statistically difference among the groups in the prevalence of women spending their own money on education related expenses. Again controlling for number of children, the amount women spent on education was not significantly different.

. .2 Contribution of the female entrepreneurs to health

Table 8.15 Household expenditures shows that the health sector is not of similar concern as the sectors of education and food consumption; however 6% of the Tea Sellers are more concerned with spending income on the health of their family members than other female entrepreneurs groups. This group is followed by 4% of Khalawi female entrepreneurs, 2% of Thowra female entrepreneurs while Kordufani female entrepreneurs of the production centres expressed 0% of their interest to spent income on health issues. The Kordufani women expressed their view points concerning health and they reported that in case of sickness they depend more on herbal treatment and eating fresh food from plants they grow in their Jabarik garden and animal they raised at home. They do not behave like the modern target group of Khartoum who seek medical treatment at any point of being sick.

The in-depth interviews with the female entrepreneurs indicated that the major health problems are malaria, pneumonia, diarrhoea, nutritional deficiencies and septicaemia that led to under five and infant mortality. The Human Development Report 2007/2008 (2007:278) indicated that during the period 1970 - 2005 the under five mortality rate (per 1,000 live births) decrease from 172 in 1970 to 90 in 2005 and infant mortality rate decrease from 104 in 1970 to 62 in 2005. However, these figures only reflect the sick people who are admitted to hospitals and recorded only. Many female entrepreneurs have indicated that they have no access to health institutions. This means that their expenditure on health becomes invisible in national statistics.

Although the Human Development Report 2007/2008 (2007:278) indicated that during the period 1996 – 2005 children under weight for age (% of children under age 5) was 41 and infants with low birth weight (%) was 31. But the study indicated that estimated 98% of the entrepreneurs' children lack nutritious food and 81% of mothers in Northern Kordufan had no chance to eat full nourishing dishes while the infant rate shows a downward trend in the northern are. The lowest rate indicated in Khartoum state female entrepreneurs indicators for urban concentration of services.

. . Contribution of the female entrepreneurs to housing improvement

For each of the two groups, female entrepreneurs were less likely to have spent their own money on housing improvements in the last 12 months than education and health. However, 45% of the female entrepreneurs expressed their desire to have home improvement loans to enable them to purchase building materials to improve or extend their houses, to build latrines, or to lay water pipes. For greater feeling of being respected by her family members and friends they reported that they need increment in the loan to reach at least a maximum loan of approximately 100,000 SD (U.S. 400) with no interest to be charged on this loan, and they are ready to pay any initial registration fee of 162.5 SD (U.S. 0.65) and small fixed administration charges. See Table 8.19 below:

Table 8.19

Desire for Spending on the Housing Improvements

	Participants N	Applicants N
Percentage of women desire spending their own money	45%	16%
Mean of the Amount Desired	Ls 40200 (20)	Ls 1600(8)

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

There was significant difference between the two groups either in the percentage of female entrepreneur's desire to spend their own money or in the amount of money they wish to spend on housing improvements.

This means that these household groups are living in conditions of poverty and they lack a permanent source of income in order to feed their family members and the microcredit provides little income to meet their first priority needs for food. 8% of the women beneficiaries consumed the income coming from the microcredit projects in educational fees. Usually these few households' objectives of the projects are to increase their income to meet the education expenditures for their children at all educational levels and especially for university level of education which becomes very expensive. These households are large in their size and have children at all levels of education therefore; the families encountered increases in education expenditures because their first priority is to meet the educational

needs. This means that family's needs for food and health are satisfied and the women concern is to meet the educational needs. In these cases usually the husband is a bread winner and has to provide food and medical treatment and the women take the responsibility to educate their children. Only 2% of the women beneficiaries consumed the income coming from the microcredit projects in health and medical fees.

From the study results it is clear that microcredit is valuable, but the female micro-entrepreneurs need and want credit as well as savings. Both sides of the balance sheet are important, with savings services desired by the female micro-entrepreneurs. But even savings and credit services are not enough. A multiplicity of products and services are desired to meet the needs of this heterogeneous group of the female entrepreneurs, households and communities.

Microcredit has also been instrumental in recognizing the multiplicity of both business and social needs of the household. Finance is not only needed for production, but equally so for school fees, health cost and death and for services such as remittances, accessible savings outlets and insurance

. . **Savings and future security**

Table 8.20

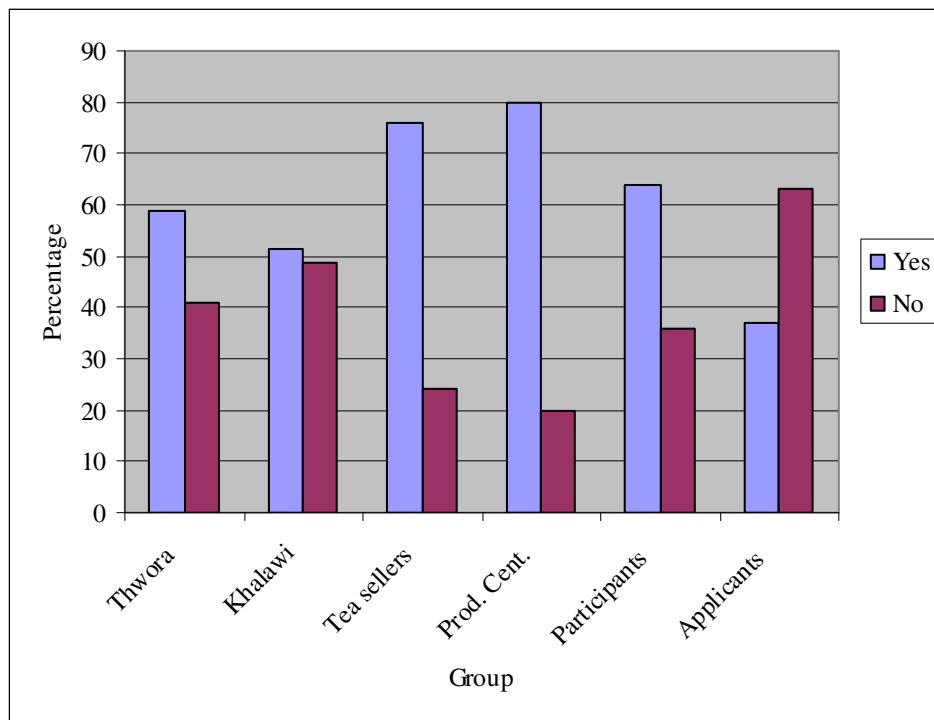
Female Entrepreneurs Managed to Save

Saving	Thowra		Khalawi		Tea Sellers		Production Centre		Average	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	Participants	Non Participants/ Applicants
Yes	59	59	41	51.3	76	76	16	80	64	37
No	41	41	39	48.7	24	24	4	20	36	63
Total	100	100	80	100	100	100	20	100	100	100

Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

Diagram 8.17

Female Entrepreneurs Managed to Save



Source: Own field data collection and analysis, 2006

On average, there is positive correlation between market-oriented production and entrepreneurs' ability to save. This is represented by 80% of Milk Production producers and 76% of Tea Sellers who managed to save after deducting all costs of production and other household expenditures. There is a negative correlation between home-oriented production and saving. This is clear for 59% of Thowra female entrepreneurs and 51% of Khalawi female entrepreneurs. There is a negative and significant correlation between not being involved in the project and saving. Only 37% of applicants managed to save. The participants and applicants reported that savings for poor families are important to mitigate the households' cash flow shortages to avert emergency situations.

As indicated in the Diagram 8.17 above, there is variation in the amount of savings among the target groups. Al Thowra, Khalawi and Tea Sellers reported that they managed regularly to build small cash reserves while Milk Production entrepreneurs reported they cannot save as regularly as the rest of the female entrepreneurs because of their seasonal income. During dry seasons when they sold their processed products they managed to secure a large amount of savings. Such mini-savings approaches largely mitigate the effects of poverty. But they are

not enough to allow an entrepreneur to completely pull herself out of poverty. According to the female entrepreneurs, expanding their profit and savings with the use of broader microcredit financial services would help to meet their livelihood security.

As stated above, 64% of the female entrepreneurs managed to save some money from the microcredit projects. This is a new savings attitude developed by undertaking microcredit projects and saving money through the income from these projects. The female entrepreneurs reported that due to the fear of future emergency situations that would create a financial burden on their households, they tried to save as much as possible through working hard on these projects. Most of them reported their mode of saving is through Al Sandoq – The Box- it is a traditional method of saving in which each woman saves her share of money in Al Sandoq either weekly or monthly and each week or month one woman gets the savings. The women save this sum of money either by buying gold or keeping cash in the household safe, Al Hofra. Al Hofra is made by digging a hole in the ground inside a safe place in the house, mainly the bedroom, which is nobody knows about, not even her husband. In Al Hofra she keeps her money or gold and only takes it out in an emergency situation. Table 8.20 and the Diagram 8.17 above show that 36% of the participants of the sample in this study did not manage to save any money. This indicates that for the family survival the women consumed the income from the microcredit projects to meet daily household needs. Therefore, they did not manage to save money. However, the women indicated that if they get another loan to expand their production inputs they will be able to get more income to meet their daily living needs and save some money.

According to the SWGU strategy rules, if a woman succeeds in using the project loan and paying back the instalments in time and implementing the project, ideally she will have the right to be financed by the bank again and get another loan and be considered by the bank as an excellent bank customer. She will also be eligible to benefit from financial resources apart from this SWGU profile. According to the financial policy of the banks, she might get a chance to get a loan without collateral and benefit from other financial systems like Musharaka and get more training, management and supervision from the bank staff. Through this process the microcredit project would reach its objectives by transforming the women and from funding of income generating activities to create small scale enterprises that would increase the living standard from conditions of vulnerability to conditions of welfare and empowerment.

. Constraints

SWGU microcredit projects help to eliminate discriminatory financial policies against women, improving their access to agro-industry inputs, financial services and skills, and promoting labour-saving technologies. This works in favour of empowerment, equality and better lives for women and their families. SWGU microcredit has been instrumental in raising awareness of and working to address some social, gender and ethnic equity issues which hold families in poverty. However, results indicate that poverty is also linked with the low overall development, in particular marketing infrastructure and services. This lack of development has a unique impact on the female entrepreneurs, on their work, their access and control over these facilities. The following points explain these poverty conditions which confront the female entrepreneurs in the study areas:

- **Technical Design Constraint:** This problem was reported by some female entrepreneurs: Tea sellers in Omdurman and the vegetable and fruit sellers at Northern Kordufan and Darfur. The Tea kiosk or the mobile shelved table was small in size and does not have enough space for female tea sellers to prepare other snacks. They reported that they prepared doughnuts to attract customers to buy the tea. The gas cylinder is small and needs to be refilled many times. The vegetable table or kiosk was designed without stool or chair for the female entrepreneurs to sit on and without shed or umbrella to protect the female entrepreneurs from the heat of the sun. Since the female entrepreneurs were not consulted it was SWGU staff at Darfur who reported that the female entrepreneurs complained and asked for a redesign of the kiosks by adding a shed and a stool. It was redesigned by increasing the loan from 16,000 dinar to 20,000 dinar for ten monthly instalments. The loan for the vegetable kiosk was increased to reach 25,000 SD because of inflation.
- Moreover, the state and SWGU efforts lack proper co-ordination not only at the top level but also at the grassroots levels. Even though there are some joint co-operation efforts such efforts should be enhanced and extended to cover other parties.

- Limited market accessibility at the local level poses another problem to the female entrepreneurs, especially Northern Kordufan. 65% of the female entrepreneurs reported that they faced problems with their projects and 35% reported that they did not face any problem. Out of the 65% who have problems, they reported difficulties with marketing of the products and low purchasing power due to the low standard of living. Northern Kordufan Kazagail female entrepreneurs reported that the local markets for cheese and milk production are saturated. Most of the households involved in milk production activities have to travel to other markets in the big cities like Al Obied or send the products to Khartoum SWGU marketing centres. 15.38% of entrepreneurs reported that problems are because of lack of competitiveness of their products in the markets. 9.23% of the female entrepreneurs reported that their major problem related to marketing was the lack of inputs of products especially during the dry seasons that caused them to bring inputs from remote areas. The Kazagail production centre objective is to open a channel for marketing. 100% of the entrepreneurs reported that the project did not satisfy its objective. 60 % reported that there is marketing of the cheese within the centre by the local cheese traders but they buy the products with low prices while 40 % reported that local cheese merchants did not like to buy the cheese from the centre due to lack of advertisements. Lack of marketing research by the SWGU staff is considered as one problem. Female entrepreneurs need assistance in finding good marketing channels and bridging the marketing gap to locally absorb the products of the female entrepreneurs
- Female entrepreneurs' ability to control of credit indicates that most women borrowers have control over loans. A few have partial control over loans. Depending on the study, it would appear that about 73 to 60 entrepreneurs have control over their loans as indicated by Production Centres and Tea Sellers entrepreneurs. Only 20% to 40% of female entrepreneurs hand over the entire loan to their husbands as indicated by Thowra and Khalawi female entrepreneurs. Control of benefits is mainly reflected in their ability to save where 64% managed to save loan instalments. Only 36% of the participants of the sample did not manage to save any money but some managed to get assistance from relatives to pay the instalment. When women do respond that they have at least partial control over income, this is often confined by their own definitions of what degree of control women or men can expect over different aspects

of the family budget. Nevertheless, while it is important, lack of control over credit does not negate all benefits for women's role and status in the community. SWGU staff members at state and local levels make great efforts to raise awareness and mobilize women to join the savings and microcredit projects as credit is adopted as an entry point to empowerment. This can be clearly observed in the increased interaction and strengthening networks with other female entrepreneurs through meetings. In addition, female entrepreneurs' ability to take loans, repay them and accumulate savings increased their self-confidence and their sense of self-worth. Also participation in credit programs resulted in increased status for women in the household and the community

. Conclusion

This chapter concludes that there are demographic factors influenced the participation of women in microcredit projects. With increasing age there was increase in participation of women in microcredit projects. 75% of the younger female entrepreneurs of age 20-39 years showed significantly more participation in SWGU microcredit projects. Household responsibilities and hard living conditions forced them to look for an alternative to working in the SWGU projects.

There is negative correlation with educational level and the female entrepreneurs' participation in the microcredit projects. Their participation decreases when their educational level increases. 62.3% of female entrepreneurs were married were motivated to join the project because they have responsibility of taking care of children and husband income is too low to satisfy household needs, or he has migrated without sending remittances or he is without work . 74.6% of female entrepreneurs participating in the microcredit projects increases with the number of their children from 3 to 6 children and most of the children are of (schooling age). As indicated in chapter three problems of women in Sudan the large number of the children puts obligations on women to take care of them especially if they are in schooling age. This is also reflects the Sudanese women problems of having children responsibilities and burden with their household work or the farm.

There is positive correlation between the family size and the participation of female entrepreneurs in microcredit projects.. 70% of the female entrepreneurs have big families consisting of five to seven and above, members who had many and various needs and demands that need to be satisfied as mentioned before women in Sudan are encountered such problems. Household assets other valuable assets, like cars, are owned by only 6% household. Safe drinking water and electricity constitute problems for 57.3 % and 55% for the female entrepreneurs respectively.

Economic impacts at the project level were reflected in the uses of the loans, increase in income and increase in production. As mentioned before part of the problem of women in Sudan can also be traced back to the lack of money or income. This problem has been emphasized by the female entrepreneurs who indicated that that they were poor because of lack of money, resource base is too small, little assets , did not have permanent sources of

income to meet the daily live expenses, and because of crisis mainly drought and conflict. Therefore, the objectives were to increase household income, diversify the household sources of income, running of existing savings and microcredit projects, increase production and consequently increase income

Large number of the female entrepreneurs (89.3%) used the income to increase income, diversify the household sources of income, running the existing savings and micro-credit projects, increase production. while 10.7% of the entrepreneurs indicated that the loan had been used for another purpose by selling the means of production owned by the project in order to meet the demands of the daily life such as health, education and other daily living expenditures. Finally 93.3% of the entrepreneurs indicated that their projects were successful and profit from the projects' income was estimated to be between 500 to 1500 SD / day that assist in paying the loan instalments on a regular basis. Majority of the women borrowers have control over loans. Only 20% to 40% of female entrepreneurs hand over the entire loan to their husbands and 64% managed to save money.

Social impact on the female entrepreneurs was reflected in their ability to make their decisions to contribute to children's education, health, the housing improvement, food consumption and Savings and future security. The school drop out and absenteeism caused female entrepreneurs to spend on the education fees and other expenses. 54% of the female entrepreneurs spend their own money amounting to an average of 2500 (10). The female entrepreneurs in the sample indicated that the major health problems are malaria, pneumonia, diarrhoea, nutritional deficiencies and septicaemia that led to under five and infant mortality. Also they lacked a permanent source of income in order to feed their family members and the microcredit provides little income to meet their first priority needs for food.

A greater percentage of beneficiaries reported spending their own money on school fees and payments for health care expenses. There was also a positive correlation between market-oriented production and entrepreneurs' ability to save. This is represented by 80% of milk production producers and 76% of Tea Sellers who managed to save after deducting all costs of production and other household expenditures. All female entrepreneurs managed regularly to build small cash reserves except milk production entrepreneurs reported they cannot save as regularly as the rest of the female entrepreneurs because of their seasonal income. They tried to save as much as possible through working hard on these projects. Most of them

reported their mode of saving is through Al Sandoq – The Box, by buying gold or keeping cash in the household safe, Al Hofra (digging a hole in the ground) and only takes it out in an emergency situation.

Chapter Nine: Summary of the findings, constraints and recommendations

9. Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will demonstrate what has been achieved from the study objectives and will show that the research problem was thoroughly addressed.

The researcher will also give an overview of the achievements of the SWGU, draw conclusions about their contribution to poverty alleviation and make recommendations

9.2 Achievements

The following paragraphs confirmed that the results achieved are in line with hypothetical problem and the objectives of the study which are related to the economic, social and political women's empowerment promoted by the Sudanese General Women Union (SWGU) in Sudan as a strategy for simultaneously addressing both poverty alleviation and women's empowerment at household level through saving and microcredit projects. SWGU used savings and microcredit projects as a tool to empower majority of poor women who live with low or no income either they are female headed household or economically dependent on their husbands' income, burdened with their household activities or responsibilities to feed, educate and take care of many children. More over they encounter a core problem which is the lack of access to credit and financial services to increase their earnings, own their assets, control over their own income, increase their bargaining power in the household, influence over economic, social and political decision making and assert their claims to economically, socially and politically empower themselves and improve their status.

Savings and microcredit and revolving loan fund projects vary in the mode of finance, provision of technical knowledge, the method of reaching the female entrepreneurs and the target beneficiaries as motioned before in the previous chapters. Loans/ microcredits are provided with interest by SudaTel Fund and Gard Hassan -free of interest provided by Zakat Social Development Fund. Both microfinancial institutions are adopting the revolving loan fund system as a rotated mechanism to mobilize the SWGU financial resources for reaching more female entrepreneurs.

Concerning poverty reduction in terms of increasing self help jobs for female entrepreneurs the in-depth interviews showed that 2699 female entrepreneurs had been provided with job opportunities thus increasing the numbers of females in the informal sectors and assisted in reducing unemployment opportunity through access to microcredits. 82% of the female entrepreneurs who were mobilized by the SWGU local basic secretariat staffs at grassroots level gained appropriate information about SWGU Mahfazat Al Marra'a and seized the financial opportunities to won their assets. 62.3% were poor married female entrepreneurs and 37.7% were unmarried female entrepreneurs who categorized themselves as single, divorcees, widows and separates female entrepreneurs who took the initiative to establish their savings and microcredit projects.

The following paragraphs summaries the study achievements as evident that the SWGU savings and microcredit projects empower women to alleviate poverty situation in Khartoum and Northern Kordufan states.

The in-depth interviews conducted with female entrepreneurs included information about their perception on their household poverty situations, the enhancing perception of female entrepreneurs' contribution to the household income and the family welfare, increasing women's participation in household decisions about the expenditure and other issues and leading to greater expenditures on women's welfare.

The results of the in-depth group discussions of the empowerment and poverty ideology from the female entrepreneur' perspectives reveal that majority of female entrepreneurs are poor women who live with low or no income. The in-depth interviews indicate that 94.7% of female entrepreneurs joined the SWGU savings and microcredit projects to increase the family income. Of whom 83% would like to overcome household budget constraints, satisfy their children's needs and add to their husbands' incomes as it is highly indicated by the four groups 92.5 % of Khalawi, 90% of production centre producers , 80% of the Tea sellers and 77 % of Al Thowra female entrepreneurs. 58.7% were female headed household who are responsible from supporting their families either their nuclear family or their extended family mainly parents. 16.3% of the female entrepreneurs who mentioned that they were motivated to get money for their children.

Some of these female entrepreneurs were divorced and separated and their former husbands failed to provide obligatory maintenance to feed their children or remarried and abandoned their wives and their children. 11.7% of the female entrepreneurs who said that they had been encouraged to support themselves. 8% of the female entrepreneurs who said that they had been motivated to help their husbands whose income was not sufficient enough to cover the household expenses. 3.6% mentioned that because they have free time, 1% because of hobbies and 0.7% because it is inherited traditional work.

Also the results indicated that in addition to low or no income dimension the female entrepreneurs conceptualized the poverty situation and their empowerment in other social dimension such as lack access to basic services, especially education and health, lack of economic security and freedom from fear of disaster, lack of ability to make choices and decisions. According to the female entrepreneurs involving in savings and microcredit projects would assist them to improve their situations.

The study reveals that the female entrepreneurs' age, marital status and education are also have an impact on the female entrepreneurs to join SWGU savings and credit projects. The highest average rate of female entrepreneur 62.3% were married female entrepreneur who involved in SWGU micro-credit and saving projects because of being burden with children responsibilities, large family size and family obligations. 75% who had children of age 3-5 and 6+ years and 43.3 % is the highest number of the female entrepreneurs groups who had six children and more. 47.5 of the women joined the SWGU micro-credit & savings projects because they are non-educated women.

In this issue of the marital status I agree with view of the household micro-economics models in which Chen & Dunn (1996:12) explained that the household concept and structure in terms of household decision making related to consumption, production, investment and resource ownership and that socially-defined differences such as age, marital status as well as gender relations within the household play an important role not only in conflict creation but also in alternative arrangements of resources, income, time and power within the household.

Also the study confirms that female entrepreneur's poverty situation can be illustrated in the following poverty measurements such as of lack basic needs and social services, lack of assets and ownership of assets. The study found that households possess durable goods belong to

their husbands. Personal valuable ownership for female entrepreneurs is gold which is owned by almost all female entrepreneurs and highest among Khalawi female micro-credit entrepreneurs (75%), Tea sellers (45%), Thowra (40%) and less percentage of ownership among Northern Kordufan (25%) rural female entrepreneurs. And animal which is highly possessed by Northern Kordufan (100%) rural female entrepreneurs and negatively owned by, Khalawi (12.5%), Tea sellers (3%) and Thowra (2%). Female entrepreneur's households' basic human needs concentrated in the sources of water and lighting. Inside water taps constituted the source of water for only 42.7% in average for female micro-credit entrepreneurs' households in Omdurman- Khartoum state. 32% of total female micro-credit entrepreneurs' households obtain water from deep wells 5% and those obtain water from other sources represent 1.7% for Northern Kordufan rural areas. Electricity constitutes the source of lighting for only 55% in average for female micro-entrepreneurs' households. Kerosene is the source of lighting for 45% in average of female micro-entrepreneurs' households at both Omdurman and Kordufan rural areas. of which 30% is used by Thowra, 81.8 at Khalawi-Fetihab, and 70% by Tea Sellers at Ombada rural areas and 100% at Northern Kordufan rural areas. Electricity constitutes the source of lighting for 55% in average for female micro-entrepreneurs' households.

Poverty also is visualized by few female entrepreneurs not only in economic dimensions as mentioned previously but there are other social dimensions in terms of long term strategic needs. These have been reflected in the female entrepreneurs' objectives of joining the SWGU savings and microcredit projects to obtain self recognition, making independent decisions and securing their future. 16.3% of the female entrepreneurs said that the pulling factor for joining the SWGU savings and microcredit projects is supporting them in satisfy their own personal strategic needs and having leisure time and recreation.

In-depth interviews with female entrepreneurs showed how the female entrepreneurs are empowered enough by participating in the whole processes of the microcredit projects cycle, deciding on their own economic activities and managing and controlling their own saving and microcredit projects.

Female entrepreneurs indicated that the female entrepreneurs choose their economic activities that translate their household needs and priorities. High percentage represents 48.3% of their choices is related to agriculture and animal husbandry economic activities to satisfy the

household food. These needs had been reflected in the SWGU economic plan -1999-2005. However few microcredit projects, which were not reflected in the SWGU economic plan-1999-2005, were being identified by the female entrepreneurs to meet the needs for social services. 11.47% new savings and microcredit projects related to basic needs for social services were chosen by the female entrepreneurs such as energy 7.6%, water 3.04%, transport 0.7% and health 0.13%. Although these microcredit projects were considered income earning projects, they also solve the lack for social services. Economic empowerment: quick earning, easily to be managed, require less mobility and depending on family labour. Service sector microcredit projects:

The study found that there was high positive correlation between women's participation in SWGU savings and microcredit projects and the kind of the project. It was found that services sector activities catered for 70% of the microcredit projects. 70% of the female entrepreneurs preferred services projects because they are very easy to manage and control, do not require sophisticated skills, employed family labour, work done within the household, provide quick return and related to immediate daily needs. These include food processing, tea and coffee selling, vegetables and spices, salted fish selling, Kissra (sorghum pancake) selling, clothes and bed sheets trading, local perfume and cosmetic selling, ice cream making and selling, and water provision. The factors of choosing these microcredit projects are in agreement with Swift (1989: 8-15), who argued that vulnerability is not simply another word for poverty but the concept of vulnerability deals with conditions of risks facing poor people, uncertainty and the ability of vulnerable people to mitigate these risks. Female entrepreneurs are concerned more with living conditions and risk mitigation.

14% of the microcredit projects were animal raising at home, mainly livestock, goat, sheep raising and milk processing to produce cheese, Samin (ghee) and yogurt and marketing of these animals either near home or at local markets milk production sellers of Kazagil centre, the sector requires too much work, as many as 19 hours per day, and many household labourers are required to assists in this work, the daily return from animals, like meat, milk, eggs and wool, during production season is quick The risk is lower in the marketing of these products which are sold easily and can also be processed and sold at peak seasons

Agriculture production catered for 2% only due to the constraints in land, water and physical mobility for seeking technology and marketing, the majority of the female entrepreneurs prefer not to undertake vegetable growing and other agricultural activities.

Social and political empowerment can be explained in building the female entrepreneurs' confidence, gaining wider experiences outside the home due to of access to microcredit, mobility, access to information and the possibility of developing other political and social role.

The results of the in-depth interviews indicated that 81% of the female entrepreneurs gained full confidence on themselves to initiate their own microcredits' ideas based on their long experience, capabilities, skills, lower risk and creation of quick, substantial returns. 12.3% of the female entrepreneurs did not have full confidence to initiate their project ideas and they were assisted by their relatives mainly their husbands and brothers. In these cases, the project ideas are mainly initiated by the husband or the eldest son, who assist the women in managing their projects since the projects are new for them and they do not have experience with them. 64.7% of the female entrepreneurs witness great mobility in their economic activities which had been limited before to the household and mother roles. Also 6.7% of the female entrepreneurs mainly milk production entrepreneurs were empowered enough to shift from casual cash wages labour to micro enterprise owners by joining the SWGU savings and microcredit and RLF projects and over come inequality in earnings, workload and using of traditional technology and equipment to produce cheese.

40% of the female entrepreneurs' promote women's collaborative and group that encouraging them to benefit from the production centre facilities by increasing female entrepreneur's education about banking and money transactions as well as other non economic services offered by the SWGU like capacity building and training activities. Also offering literacy, health, and nutrition and environment sessions as well as discussing their community issues. In addition female entrepreneurs managed to participate in most of the events organized by SWGU through the SWGU hierarchical structure at all levels, especially local levels that facilitates female entrepreneurs to raise their voices to be heard by decision-makers at state and national levels regarding all concerns related to their needs, priorities and other community concerns.

64.7% of the target group, mainly Thowra women and Fetihab do not have previous experience those who have previous experience such as milk production female entrepreneurs and tea sellers were using traditional technology. In-depth interviews indicated that introducing new technology provoked strong negotiation and bargaining power among 64.7% tea sellers who shift from energy, money and time consuming devices of using charcoal and firewood to cheaper, efficient and healthy gas and vegetable sellers who are now using new technology of presenting their products and selling under healthy shelters. In-depth interviews indicated that Social empowerment can be reflected in the female entrepreneurs' negotiating ability and the use of new appropriate technology at the production level. 64.7% of the female entrepreneurs managed to negotiate, bargaining in the prices and modify the design of the mobile shelving tables for vegetable selling by adding shading umbrella for health reasons. Same happened for tea sellers by changing the size of the shelves used for the utensils and the gas cylinder to be replaced by bigger ones. Marketing production centers established at 6 states assisted in increasing the mobility of the female entrepreneurs to access to market facilities.

Economic impact can be inferred from the ability of the female entrepreneurs to benefit from consultative structure established by the SWGU at state and local level to better administer savings and microcredit projects, create independency in terms of increasing the household income level, control over income and ownership of the microcredit projects.

The in-depth interviews indicated that 84% of the female entrepreneurs managed to pay their instalments and in limited time and this indicates that female entrepreneurs are committed to pay the money that they owe at the right time and to gain the trust of the financial institutions. 58% of the female entrepreneurs said that the loan is sufficient for them to establish their business. 86.7 % of the female entrepreneurs indicated that the monthly instalments of the micro-credit projects are appropriate. 74% of the female entrepreneurs preferred to pay the instalments monthly and this method of the instalments payment is suitable based on the nature of these small and quick daily return projects.

As the results of the SWGU savings and microcredit female entrepreneurs have owned sustainable resources of production such as the microcredit, equipment and tools of production. 89.3% female entrepreneurs indicated that the production of their projects was

increased, and the income from selling their products was used to expand the projects by adding new products. 93.3% indicated that their projects were successful and there was profit from the projects' income that was estimated to be between 500 and 1500 dinnar per day

Economic empowerment can be also indicated in the ability to use the income as the In-depth interviews with the female entrepreneurs' social empowerment can be reflected in the use of the increased income, sense of future security, bargaining power within the household and the decisions to control and utilize the income for the household welfare.

The in-depth group interviews with the female entrepreneurs indicated that SWGU savings and microcredit projects contributed to increasing their income levels and their control over income, which led to greater levels of economic independence. Social direct effect of their increased cash earnings is believed to be an enhancement of their bargaining power within the household. Women have different voices of spending preferences than men on nutrition and other expenditures such as clothes for children, food, education, health care, etc.

It is believed that an increase in women's intra-household bargaining power could have a greater impact on the total household's spending than the actual amount of her increased earnings. 90.7% of the women beneficiaries indicated that family income was increased, and thus the family affairs improved, due to the microcredit projects. A small number 9.3% reported no improvement in family income, because their projects faced constraints at the beginning; more was spent on raw material and income was spent on daily life needs. Female entrepreneurs bear the responsibility of providing daily basic need it was found that 48% spent the income they gained from the microcredit projects on daily basic needs. 26.3% for buying family food, 22.7% for paying fees for children's education and 3% paying for medical treatment. This indicates that women's first priority is food; second is education; and third is health. Other area of spending is their The SWGU savings and credit projects have social impact on female entrepreneurs regarding their own contribution to housing improvement. For each of the two groups Khartoum and N Kordufan, female entrepreneurs were less likely to have spent their own money on housing improvements in the last 12 months than on education and health.

The SWGU savings and microcredit projects have social impact on the participants' future security. There is positive correlation between participating in market-oriented production and

saving. A high percentage of milk production producers (80%) and tea-sellers (76%) managed to save and build small cash reserves after deducting all costs of production and other household expenditures. While home-oriented Thowra female entrepreneurs (59%) and Khalawi female entrepreneurs (51%) managed to save regularly some money. Female entrepreneurs mentioned that saving is important for poor families to mitigate households' cash flow shortages and liquidity excesses and in averting some emergency situations and crises.

Study results indicated that the SWGU as a NGO managed to create and handle the financial resources for the SWGU Mahfazat Al Marra'a Fund, obtained high payment rate of instalments, and achieved good performance as a microfinance institution in delivering the savings and microcredit projects and its role of contributing to increase the sustainable financial resources to empower poor women.

In 1999 the financial contribution of SudaTel to establish the SWGU Mahfazat Al Marra'a Fund at 6 states was channelled through the Credit and Social Development Bank and it was equal to 19,000,000 SD to open SWGU accounts for female savings and microcredit projects. SWGU Mahfazat Al Marra'a Fund in Northern Kordufan and Khartoum states got a large share of 5 million SD each, Northern Darfur 3 million SD and Al Gezira, Nahar Al Neil and Gadarif 2 million SD each. In total Northern Kordufan received the largest amount of 7,210,000 SD (2.2 m SD from the state). Only one state from the southern Sudan: Bahr Al Gazal got a chance to benefit from the savings and microcredit projects. High rate of performance was recorded for savings and microcredit projects at the northern states' rate which was equal to 88.9% and 11.1% for one southern Sudan.

Economic empowerment in terms of payment of the loan/microcredit and its savings through the RLF mechanism for reaching new female entrepreneurs started end of 2000. In two states, Northern Kordufan and Nahar Al Nil, there was a low percentage of repayment. However, the highest percentage of repayment, equal to 45%, was recorded for Northern Kordufan with an increase in Zakat revolving loan fund which was equal to 2,200,000 SD and 3.65% of the allocated fund. 36% of repayment is recorded for Nahar Al Nil with a decrease in funds under utilization. Other states recorded no repayment since the loans had not completed one year. Khartoum states' first priority was the implementation of the Marketing Centre. 34 female entrepreneurs were then given Gard Hassan microcredit loans.

In 2003 there was a difference between the funds utilized and the funds allocated which is estimated to be 7,510,000 SD, equal to 21.96% of the allocated fund. This indicates very good performance within four years. By state, Northern Kordufan shows the best performance followed by Al Gadarif, while Khartoum shows 0% of payment.

End of 2003 the SWGU managed to reach the target number of female entrepreneurs of 866 as planned. Northern Kordufan records the highest number of female entrepreneurs, 267 equal to 30.83 % of the target group. West Darfur recorded 202 female entrepreneurs, equal to 23.32% of the target group while Khartoum reached 78 female entrepreneurs, 9% of the total target group. The lowest state was Al Gezira which reached 25 female entrepreneurs, equal to 2.88% of the target group.

In 2004 SWGU Mahfazat Al Marra'a received additional financial resources equal to 20,000,000 SD that were channelled through the Credit and Social Development Bank to support the North, Sinnar, Kassala, and Blue Nile instead of the Red Sea state as planned to benefit from SWGU savings and microcredit fund. Each state got 5,000,000 SD. Additional fund equal to 15,000,000 SD from the Khartoum State Ministry of Finance was allocated to Mahfazat Al Marra'a Fund at Khartoum State , including Omdurman, Khartoum and Khartoum North.

The study results indicate that within one year Mahfazat Al Marra'a fund managed to utilize the revolved fund which was increased by 44.98%: from 35,100,000 SD in 2003 to reach 50,890,000 SD by 2004 and the percentage of the female entrepreneurs increased by 44.68% or from 866 to reach 1253 female entrepreneurs.

2005: The study results indicated that Mahfazat Al Marra'a was fair equal distribution of the microcredit fund between six states of Southern Sudan. These states were Western Equatorial, Bahar Al Jabal, Eastern Equatorial, Jungli, Upper Nile and Buhiarat. Each Mahfazat Al Marra'a state got fund equal to 5.0 million SD (total fund was equal to 30,000,000 SD) for additional 600 female entrepreneurs (100 female entrepreneurs from each state) each female entrepreneur received a loan equal to 50,000 SD.

The study results showed that there are strong and effective links created between the SWGU institutions at all levels and the national financial institutions, banks and ministries that have concerns in female savings and microcredit activities. As well as establishing a strong delivery structure that reaches remote areas.

In-depth interviews indicate that gender equality has been promoted by allocating sustainable financial resources to bridge gender gap in access to financial resources and empower female entrepreneurs in rural areas where SWGU female staff were available who facilitated linkages creation with the concerned institutions. The In-depth interviews indicated that the SWGU savings and microcredit project impact can be explained is in its ability to initiate a base for the establishment and the existence of a microfinance system that has been dedicated not only to reach but also to empower women at grass roots levels. Evidences from the study indicated that this had been achieved through strong linkages created with the Ministry of Finance, Zakat Social Development Fund and SudaTel as financing institutions for savings and microcredit projects for reaching the female entrepreneurs. There was a sustainable micro-financial system accessible to benefit female entrepreneurs with estimated initial fund equal to 958.55 million SD that had been mobilized for by using revolving loan fund mechanism to mobilize the microcredits offered by Zakat Social Development Fund (microcredit free of interest) and SudaTel Fund (microcredit with interest). Also SWGU played role in eliciting funds from Zakat Social Development Fund for constructing six Social Development and Production Centres. Budget allocated for 6 Social Development and Production Centres was equal to 260,000,000 SD including capacity building of 60 Khalawi Shikha (Khalawi teachers) as well as RLF for poverty reduction.

The study results indicate that strong linkages were created with the government, NGOs, academic and other related ministries, institutions at the national, state and local levels in women's poverty situation analysis and the formulation of the women poverty reduction strategy. Also linkages were created with the National Planning Council for Women Development for planning and setting the women strategy (2000-2020), policy and national plan formulation (1998-2002). Financial linkages were created with Zakat Social Development Fund and SudaTel and the Ministries of finance, Credit and Social Development bank and Agricultural bank for setting up special financial policy to administer savings and microcredit projects. Good coordination was created with 21 NGOs and other ministries for the execution of the SWGU Plans and the implementation of the savings and

microcredit projects for economically empowering vulnerable female entrepreneurs. Channels were created with agriculture banks for fund service delivery in rural areas where the Credit and Social Development bank facilities are not available

The in-depth interviews' results showed that the impact of the SWGU microcredit projects had been reflected in the institutionalizing a sustainable hierarchical SWGU structure capable to administer savings and microcredit projects at all levels, especially local levels. Building the capacity of the SWGU structure staff members at national, state and local level to proper administrate the implementation of the saving and microcredit projects to achieve the long term efficient financial sustainability of the SWGU's future microfinance service. Other capacity building included organising various conferences, workshops and training courses at national, state and local levels. These training courses included the concept of development, preparation of project proposals, methods of project budgeting, project implementation and constraints facing small scale projects, time management, meeting management and the project administration, bank policies, project selection and management, report writing and follow-up process. In addition preparation of a marketing plan, work labour force laws and female labour rights, project cost estimation and accounting, project budgeting, technical training for female entrepreneurs at production centers. The impact of these capacity building is that the female entrepreneurs formulated women's group with homogeneous composition members and strong structure.

9. Risks and constraints

The risks and constraints can be summarized in the following lines:

Administrative constraints related to the availability of data: Lack of recent official data at the household level caused delay in the implementation and timely utilization of the savings and microcredit projects that consequently caused a change in the bank transaction due to the change in the foreign exchange rate.

SWGU staff lacked the capacity to analyze and assess female entrepreneurs' households and identify poverty situations that caused female entrepreneurs to be vulnerable.

War and conflict situation in Sudan affected the SWGU female savings and microcredit projects, especially in West Darfur, which was at a disadvantage because it was excluded

from the first nine states that were targeted to start the projects.

Bank policies affected the implementation of the savings and microcredit projects and created inequality in the distribution of fund channelled through the Credit and Social Development Bank branches due to concentration of branches in some states and urban areas of Khartoum and central states. This policy caused unequal budget disbursement of microcredits by excluding the states (4 states) where the bank branches were not accessible to benefit from the microcredit projects in time. Only one state: Great Bahar Al Gazal from the Southern states was included in the 1999 financial plan of the Credit and Social Development Bank. For the same reason the bank policy also affected some of the NGOs that were supposed to implement the microcredit projects as well as their concentration on certain states. As known, the main root cause of poverty in Sudan was the inequality in resource distribution among different states the same attitudes manifested during the implementation of the female savings and microcredit projects, especially among NGOs funded by SudaTel.

All the funds allocated to start the production centre and microcredit projects in the White Nile state were utilized for the construction of the social development centre. This indicates gender blindness and lack of vision regarding the important of the female microcredit projects for the household poverty alleviation.

Other risks emerged because of the bank's credit system, regulations and rules. The imposition of unequal and high rates of interest in the Murabaha financial mode, in particular for SudaTel microcredits, and the overlap with the Quard Hassan (without interest) mode of the Zakat Social Development Fund, created confusion and tension among SudaTel female entrepreneurs and raised their desire to join and get benefit from Quard Hassan of the Zakat Social Development Fund rather than SudaTel credit. Moreover, female entrepreneurs who were more ambitious in order to have access to the third financial mode, Musharaka, to expand their credit and consequently their savings and microcredit projects, faced constraints since the bank policy preferred Murabaha rather than Musharaka for female entrepreneurs

Bank finance policies of microcredit projects allocated a small ratio of their ceiling budget (10%) to family production and female microcredit projects, which was not enough to finance future expanded projects of female entrepreneurs. It was found that the that percentage affected the performance of SWGU female savings and microcredit projects up to 2003, the

allocated funds for implementing savings and microcredit projects was less than the planned funds (planned: 37,970,000 SD and allocated: 35,100,000 SD).

The banking system was a weak financial system with relatively low lending capacity for poor female entrepreneurs. If the enterprise failed, it would cause small female entrepreneurs to be burdened with debt and their households to lose their livelihood. Finding the collateral and dealing with complicated bank procedures are constraints for the female entrepreneurs.

Almost (95.3%) of the female entrepreneurs were dependant totally on the SWGU staff at local levels to deal with banking processes.

In case of SudaTel fund the bank's agreement with the SWGU was that 15% of the annual peripheral profit should be distributed as follow: 50% to the Credit & Social Development bank for administrative costs and 50% to the SWGU at the state level to meet the SWGU's administrative staff costs. The amount going to the SWGU staff was not enough for them to perform their regular field visits and other administrative work since there was lack of coordination between the SWGU staff and the bank staff to jointly conduct their visits. The situation has been worse for SWGU staff in the states where there is no Credit and Social Development Bank branch, such as at Bahar Al Gazal and Northern Darfur because the agriculture bank was being considered another implementing financial institution with additional administrative cost by sharing (7%) of the peripheral profits with SWGU (4%) and the Credit and Social Development Bank (4%).

There was low percentage of repayment, especially during the first two years of the project. Other states recorded no repayment since the loans were not completed during the one year period. Also bank procedures were complicated because of the requirement of collateral, high administrative costs, bank commission fees and complicated procedures. In addition bank's regulations regarding the microcredit grace period and the monthly instalments period were inappropriate especially for agriculture projects. Loan size was insufficient.

Female entrepreneurs encountered many constraints, especially in marketing their products. The issue of marketing led them to look for markets outside their residential areas, depend on SWGU staff to take their products to be sold in Khartoum: Al Bait Al Sudani and consequently they did not paid their instalments on time.

The study has indicated that the female entrepreneurs' incomes from their projects, especially among the N. Kordufan agriculturalists and others who were involved in animal husbandry, were highly susceptible to risks, some of which could occur at the same time. Weather and drought were the most uncontrollable and often the most devastating risks, but disease and plagues were similarly important

Female entrepreneurs involved in agriculture projects lacked most of the agriculture inputs for growing vegetables such as the land and sufficient water and agriculture processing need enough capital (more than the size of the loan they would receive) and physical mobility in terms of marketing and looking for new technology. In addition returns were low. The main constraint facing Kazagail milk production projects was that seasonal loan was not available. The production activities and consequently the income earned happen during harvest season only.

Female entrepreneurs had experienced increasing fears that women's small increases in income were leading to a decrease in male contribution to certain types of household expenditures like buying clothes and school stationery for young students and paying for medical treatments. Where female entrepreneurs had set up enterprises, their small increases in income had come at the cost of heavier workloads and repayment pressures. Female entrepreneurs had also employed their daughters and daughters-in-law as unpaid family labourers, increasing their workload.

The technical design of the savings and microcredit projects was considered a problem that was reported by some of the tea sellers in Omdurman and the vegetable and fruit sellers in Northern Kordufan and Darfur redesigned vegetable and tea selling kiosks added additional cost and increased the loan size due to inflation the cost of the loan increased from 16,000 SD to 20,000 SD payable in ten monthly instalments. The loan for the vegetable kiosk was increased to 25,000 SD.

The study results indicated that that there were limited marketing facilities for the female entrepreneurs who benefited from microfinance services and seriously affected the absorptive capacity of financial and technical services, as seen in the Kazagil production centre. There were also both cyclical and seasonal price fluctuations in milk production and other commodities, not only due to local production variations but also because of outside prices

such as the forced political price of milk and its production, subsidies and exchange controls and globalization, especially when processing materials were imported from outside the state or outside the country. The lack of marketing facilities had a unique impact on the female entrepreneurs, on their work and their access and control over these facilities. Limited market accessibility at local levels poses another problem for the female micro-creditors, especially in N. Kordufan. In the study sample 65% (195) of the sample mentioned that they faced problems with their projects such marketing and purchasing power were low due to the low standard of living, difficulty in marketing cheese to merchants due to decreasing prices and difficulty to find new local marketing channels local markets were saturated with cheese. Also most of the households involved in milk production activities, lack of competitiveness of their products in the market, lack of input products due to lack of advertisement caused other marketing problems.

Having reviewed the positive impacts and the negative impacts of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects, the following issues are recommended for achieving greater impact on poverty alleviation and women's empowerment in the Sudan.

9. Recommendations

The following paragraphs include the recommendations that supposed to be materialized to reduce the household poverty conditions and increase the women's empowerment gained from the SWGU savings and microcredits projects:

Capacity-building and training programmes should be related to long-term results and women's empowerment in decision making, asset control, and social and gender relations. At local level, female entrepreneurs need support in the areas of training in group structure and formulation, group work and participatory approaches.

More effort should be directed to the empowerment of women at the national level to support local issues at grassroots levels such as appropriate allocation of budgets, flexible financial institutions with required financial services such as provision of consumption loans, savings, facilitation of license issuance, appropriate workplaces and work locations, appropriate technology, quiet well recognition of female entrepreneurs capacity building and their participation in reflecting their own problems at national level, solve their problem at state

levels, etc to achieve sustain increase in income and improvement of their status

More funds are need in the future to reach more female target groups.

The SWGU savings and microcredit projects should be combined with other socio-economic and political interventions. Female entrepreneurs should be involved in the daily issues and events by the SWGU staff on all levels. Many women are now coming to the SWGU centers looking for problem solving and financial and economic support. This would be a chance for them to be involved in facilitating the process of the taking a new household survey and population census which is going on and finding out how to participate in the 2007 election as a preparatory stage to strengthening their political ideology, since democracy and some political affiliated parties, like the Umma party, start functioning at grassroots levels. Thus the SWGU must look at new ways of integrating these new political affiliations at grass root level while sustaining their hierarchical structure.

The SWGU must look beyond microcredit to other financial services including voluntary and accessible savings. In the interest of the poorest and women in particular, there may be new possibilities when microfinance is viewed as a tool not only for income promotion but for income protection as well.

Reaching out to poor female entrepreneurs where they live and work is a very effective short-term strategy to increase their participation in the microcredit program. Almost all of the female entrepreneurs (95.3%) take part in this program without having to gather up their courage to take the daring, often disapproved of, step of going to a public office to ask for a loan. Negotiations take place privately in the women's homes, and even the tiniest loan is given serious consideration by sympathetic SWGU staff rather than the more usual impersonal loan committees, which often include representatives from banks and other formal credit institutions that would dismiss such small loans as not worth the bother of administration. Unsolicited introductory visits by SWGU staff to women's homes have proved particularly helpful.

SWGU must look for a long-term strategy that will foster the link between the female entrepreneurs and the financial institutions and encourage them to become more dependent on themselves to seek microfinance services, especially those who wish to expand their savings

and credit projects. The situation is improved if the bank staffs are all females. It has become clear from this study that there is a great advantage in having women work with women. Both unsolicited and regular home visits were unremarkable and unobjectionable if they were made by women.

Management training can be improved by suiting it to female entrepreneurs' needs. Female entrepreneurs cannot be expected to find time to attend formal, theoretical group training sessions at the social development centres. Instead, staff can visit them at home at times that suit the entrepreneurs, who have both business and household work to do every day. The instruction they receive should be related specifically to their microcredit project's management and should be given in familiar surroundings by someone the female entrepreneur has learned to know and trust and who speaks her own language.

Savings and microcredit projects should take into account all the realities of the female entrepreneurs' lives and expect that they will always be able to meet performance standards as home and market oriented producers by being more competitive, using advanced telecommunication devices like mobile telephones, being computer literate, using new technology and finding new marketing channels for selling their goods in public places.

Apart from the social development Production Centres' group work, efforts to force or encourage female entrepreneurs' individual microcredit projects to band together as a group are generally counter productive and empirical. Collective activities need a clearly defined objective. For example, a number of small businesses could come together to purchase supplies at bulk cost. Another successful approach has been for the program to secure large contracts for goods itself, which it divides among various individual female entrepreneurs.

The national socio-economic policy should support using microcredit for productive purposes. Credit mechanisms should be linked with skill development and other social and human capital development. Savings and microcredit projects should generate positive results for the four groups of female entrepreneurs, especially the productive milk processor groups, Khalawi women and tea-sellers that constitute 73.3% of the sample group, which comprises a large number of poor women.

The accomplishments of the savings and microcredit projects are a manifestation of a

paradigm shift in microfinance, defeating the notion that the economically disadvantaged constitute a poor risk and are not creditworthy. This should lead the SWGU to coordinate more with SudaTel, Zakat and the Social Development Fund to provide diversified financial services. As analyzed in chapter 7, female entrepreneurs used most of their income to pay for education and health. This creates a need for diversification of financial services and loans of the Zakat, Social Development Fund and Credit and Social Development Bank as well as complementary non-financial programming for the same target groups.

The Kazagail milk-production centre women, the tea-sellers and the Khalawi women, who constitute 66.6% of the female entrepreneurs sampled in this study, were considered the poorest borrowers. They benefited more from the Zakat Social Development Fund (loans with no interest) than the Thowra female entrepreneurs, who were considered middle and upper poor and who benefited from SudaTel credit because of the regulations of the Credit and Social Development Bank (loans with no interest). Although very few were excluded from microcredit and savings programs because of defaults in repayment due to personal reasons, bank policy should be altered to consider such situations, and banks should reschedule repayment time based on times suitable to the female entrepreneurs instead of cancelling their projects.

There was a sound financial management system, and the success of borrowers' microcredit projects was crucial to achieving the project's results. However, there should be a direct link between repayment and the success of female entrepreneurs' microcredit projects and even a link between repayment and social and gender impact. This could strengthen the physical mobility of the female entrepreneurs to deal directly with bank staff and negotiating and expressing their opinions on loan size, instalments and collateral. This is because repayment is not an accurate indicator that fund was used to invest in successful productive activities. Also aggregate repayment and disbursement figures may mask important differences between different segments of the female entrepreneur.

The SWGU and bank officials at state and local levels were concerned about quantitative financial data alone. This will not cause the SWGU at the national level to learn more about social and gender impact, who is making loans and who is not and why. To judge the impact of the microcredit projects the SWGU staff needs not only information on repayment and disbursement rates but also more qualitative information that will help them to identify the

strengths, weaknesses and needs of poor female entrepreneurs within the target group. This will ultimately help to identify more social impacts dimensions and improve the programme

The capacity of the staff of the SWGU and the Credit and Social Development Bank to monitor quantitatively and qualitatively over the long term must be strengthened to produce reliable data. Changes in female entrepreneurs' equity and economic status takes place over the long term. It is seldom a linear process and snapshot follow-up visits may be misleading. Also SWGU staff needs not to concentrate on economic indicators only as measurements for the women's empowerment but to concentrate on achieving social empowerment indicators such as decision making and ability to control the income earned.

The impact of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects on gender equity by including women in the poverty reduction strategy and mobilizing financial resources so that female entrepreneurs can earn money is only part of the equation. The study shows that female entrepreneurs' ultimate aims are not only limited to increasing income but also include other objectives. The SWGU must concentrate on enhancing female entrepreneurs' visibility and enabling them to voice their concerns to the Credit and Social Development Bank, SudaTel, the state consultative staff and the SWGU staff in particular to achieve long-term impact in raising their status and improving gender equity. A few female entrepreneurs, like the Al Thowra female entrepreneurs who were occupying non traditional roles and occupations, for example, could challenge accepted norms and make a path for future generations

The impact of microcredit alone on the female entrepreneurs' status and gender equity is limited. Most women borrowers had only partial control over loans. SWGU staffs need to raise awareness and mobilize female entrepreneurs, particularly at the local levels, and facilitating obtaining financial assets and credit. These are crucial and play important role as an entry point to strengthen women's networks, increase female entrepreneurs' mobility, increase their knowledge and self-confidence, and increase their status in the family as well as the community.

The SWGU staff must consider their capacities to manage microfinance programs. Greater specialization may be more effective either sectorally or by working collaboratively with other institutions, universities and other NGOs that have complementary skills.

The conflict between some of the social objectives identified by the female entrepreneurs and business objectives were often a challenge for SWGU and need to be harmonized to benefit poor female entrepreneurs through the adoption of participatory planning approaches.

As a result of the SWGU microcredit and saving projects, each state is now accumulating financial resources under the state SWGU microcredit and saving projects. This enables the SWGU itself to be considered as an implementing microfinance organization and have the opportunity to initiate the idea of having a special Credit and Social Development Bank for women in other words, establishing a Poor Women's Trust or a bank for poor people. This will assist in setting new bank policies that would be directed toward improving access to raw materials; extension of services and infrastructure such as marketing facilities; flexible regulatory framework, rules, and financial procedures; and different rates of interest. Sufficient financial institutions or mobile bank facilities must be built so that there are Credit and Social Development Bank branches for poor people. Microcredit projects could be guided by four core themes: reaching the poorest; reaching and empowering women; building financially self sufficient institutions; and ensuring a positive, measurable impact on the lives of the clients and their families.

Establishing mobile Poor Women's Trust or a rural bank for poor women will assist in easily reaching as far as possible remote rural areas and reducing bias in microcredit disbursements and all bank rigid policy, rules and regulations.

The SWGU savings and microcredit projects are helping to create a safety net for the poor, reducing risk and contributing to social capital development. However, the Women's Trust should be encouraged to establish linkages by issuing financial guidelines and formulating a regulatory framework. The consultative committee headed by Honourable State Governor is also working for the effective coordination and strengthening of SWGU savings and microcredit projects activities.

Appropriate savings credit should be developed to meet the aspirations of poor female entrepreneurs. The SWGU is now considered an alternative to direct implementation by other NGO programmes because it facilitates linkages, promotes financial services, and concentrates on non financial aspects of the projects such as group formation and training.

The SWGU should consider that the savings and microcredit projects involve a long-term commitment from the Zakat Social Development Fund, SudaTel, the SWGU and the Credit and Social Development Bank staff. Financial intermediation by the institution is an ongoing requirement, and concentrating only on the concept of short-term interventions may have a negative impact on existing informal and formal financial arrangements.

Zakat Social Development Fund, Credit and Social Development Bank and the SWGU should realize that the influence of the SWGU savings and microcredit projects in poverty alleviation and empowerment should be measured not only by income earning, income increase and offering Zakat only, but in terms of vulnerability and risk reduction. It may therefore be useful to consider greater flexibility in Zakat and SudaTel financial services and provide diversified consumption loans, savings plans, insurance and other mechanisms to reduce vulnerability. Savings is the forgotten half of microfinance. The Zakat Fund and the SudaTel lending programs include a forced savings component, but the banks have not adopted in this program, so access to a savings plan has been limited in most programs. Compared to credit projects, there should be much reflection on the impact and importance of savings for the poor and for the female entrepreneurs in particular.

It is important that the SWGU examines the two approaches microcredit and revolving loans adopted by the SWGU savings and microcredit projects and compare their appropriateness for different female entrepreneurs in Sudan. They should examine the application of different financial modes, because female entrepreneurs appear to favour the Zakat Social Development Fund and its Quard Hassan and may indirectly discourage the SudaTel Credit models.

9. Conclusion

In conclusion the research objectives have been achieved and the problems of women in Sudan in terms of lack of financial resources and credits and access to financial resources as been tackled through the SWGU microcredit projects by facilitated the access to microcredits and eliminating the bias in the financial resources disbursement between the various states. The achievements of the SWGU and the positives and negative impacts of the programme design at the national and state levels in terms of decision making and control of the financial resources directed for the empowerment of female entrepreneurs at the national and state level through the coordination, fund raising, establishing microcredit structure and capacity building of the SWGU staff to implement and administer the microcredit projects.

In addition SWGU roles' in promoting women's economic empowerment not only in terms of instalments repayments but also in terms of increasing income and increasing production of their projects were fully been demonstrated. In addition the social empowerment dimensions achieved due to the SWGU microcredit in terms of female entrepreneurs abilities to take decisions and control and use the earned income for themselves and their family members welfare such taking decision to solve education, health, food and household improvement issues and income protection to reduce their vulnerability and their contribution to alleviate poverty within the household has been thoroughly illustrated. Other social dimension that was not fully achieved is the women mobility the study found that still female entrepreneurs find difficulty in the mobility to go to the bank or do marketing far away from their local areas.

Many constraints that affect the microcredit projects and limit their impacts on the female entrepreneurs had been discussed mainly that related to rigid bank policies, rules, regulations and procedures related to credits and financial disbursement, management and supervision of microcredit projects. Due to that most female entrepreneurs were dependant totally on the SWGU staff at local levels to deal with banking processes.

There are other constraints related to the top down approach adopted by the SWGU, financial institution and other concerned people in the implementation of the microcredit projects which is the lack of genuine female entrepreneurs' participations in their project identification, design, loan system preparation etc. There are also many constraints related to the capacity of the SWGU staff members in participatory data collection, analysis, planning, administration

and monitoring and evaluation and to assess female entrepreneurs' households and identify poverty situations that caused female entrepreneurs to be vulnerable or the impact of the credit to alleviate poverty situations. In addition lack of gender awareness and gender relations issues at the national, state and local levels.

Constraints related to the credit projects includes Female entrepreneurs' incomes were highly susceptible to risks, low and seasonal, weather, drought and diseases were the most uncontrollable and often the most devastating risks. Agriculture projects lacked most of the agriculture inputs, physical mobility in terms of marketing and looking for new technology. Constraints in marketing their products, limited marketing facilities had impact on the female entrepreneurs, on their work and their access and control over these facilities. Finally war and conflict situation in Sudan affected the implementation of the credit projects.

For the SWGU microcredit projects to alleviate poverty and vulnerability and empower female entrepreneurs it is recommended to build capacity by conducting training programmes related to long-term results and women's empowerment in decision making, asset control and management, and social and gender relations. At local level, female entrepreneurs need support in the areas of training in group structure and formulation, group work and participatory approaches.

Appropriate allocation of budgets and flexible financial institutions with required financial services. SWGU microcredit and savings should be combined with other socio-economic and political interventions. Reaching out to poor female entrepreneurs where they live and work is a very effective short-term strategy to increase their participation in the microcredit program SWGU must look for a long-term strategy that will foster the link between the female entrepreneurs and the financial institutions. Offering group loan will encourage female entrepreneurs' individual microcredit projects to band together as a group and decide their own collective activities. The national socio-economic policy should support using microcredit for productive purposes and should lead the SWGU to coordinate more with SudaTel, Zakat and the Social Development Fund to provide diversified financial services. Bank policy should be altered to consider such situations, and banks should reschedule repayment time based on times suitable to the female entrepreneurs. Financial management system should create a direct link with the female entrepreneurs' microcredit projects to strengthen the physical mobility of the female entrepreneurs, to deal directly with bank staff

and negotiate and express their opinions on loan size, instalments and collateral. Enhancing female entrepreneurs' visibility and enabling them to voice their concerns to financial institutions, banks, the state consultative staff and the SWGU staff in particular to achieve long-term impact in raising their status and improving gender equity. Raise awareness and mobilize female entrepreneurs, to obtain assets and credit. These are crucial and play important role as an entry point to strengthen women's networks, increase female entrepreneurs' mobility, increase their knowledge and self-confidence, and increase their status in the family as well as the community.

To tackle al the above mentioned financial obstacles and mobility issues the researcher recommended the establishment of special Credit and Social Development Bank for women in other words, establishing a Poor Women's Trust or a bank for poor women. This will assist in setting special new bank policies that would be directed toward improving access to credit, savings, raw materials; extension of services and infrastructure such as marketing facilities; flexible regulatory framework, rules, and financial procedures; as well strengthening women's mobility to go to the bank and raise their voice and discuss their issues. Sufficient financial institutions or mobile bank could be guided by four core themes: reaching the poorest; reaching and empowering women; building financially self-sufficient institutions; and ensuring a positive, measurable impact on the lives of the female entrepreneurs and their families. Establishing mobile Poor Women's Trust or a bank for poor women will assist in easily reaching as far as possible remote rural areas and reducing bias in credit disbursements and all bank rigid policy, rules and regulations

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Annexes- : Tables, Figures and Charts

Annex -1: Table 4.12

Participation of Women in Professional Institutions, 2001

S. No	Institutions	No. of Female	Percentage
1	Foreign Relations	81	11.2
2	Fishes	41	17
3	Equipment & Stores	90	20.3
4	National Council for Construction Development	2	22.2
5	Council of Ministries	59	26.4
6	Animal Resources	435	27.7
7	Apprenticeship	58	29.6
8	Relations of National Council	16	31.4
9	Environment & Construction	11	33.3
10	General Administration of Survey	94	36.6
11	Federal Government Chamber	33	37.1
12	Irrigation & Water Supply	725	37.97
13	General Practitioners Institutions	199	40
14	Federal Administration of Lands	4	40.2
15	Medicine	717	42
16	Slaughter Houses	68	42.8
17	Trade Personnel Department	40	44.4
18	Statistics Central Department	182	49.3
19	Ministry of Health	510	49.3
20	Investment Department	40	49.4
21	Justice	592	50
22	National Centre for Artificial Limbs	19	50
23	Agriculture & Forests	411	50.6
24	Workers & Administrative Reform	105	51.7
25	Animal Health	43	52
26	Taxation Chamber	3,176	52.1
27	Ministry of Trade	192	52.4
28	Internal Audit	34	53.1
29	Trade Cooperative Department	48	53.8
30	International Cooperation	62	54.8
31	Public Administration of Animal Prod. Development	37	55.2
32	Industry & Investment	84	59.3
33	Financial Department	142	60.5
34	Public Administration for General Affairs	119	61.9
35	Human Resources	49	62.5
36	Public Service Department	163	64
37	Economic Planning	42	66.7
38	National Board	7	70
	Total /Average	8730	44.9

Source: Own data compiled from (SWG2003:17-18)

Annex -1: Table 4.18

Poverty Indices According to Region of Residence, Gender, Sector of Employment,
Education Level and Mode of Living of Head of Household (1990, 1996)

	1990						1996					
	P0		P1		P2		P0		P1		P2	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Region												
Northern	88.6	56.1	62.42	32.23	49.02	18.02	90.0	92.7	60.72	67.48	45.52	53.65
Eastern	89.0	60.4	59.58	34.45	44.68	20.87	88.4	94.3	60.07	71.50	46.26	58.05
Khartoum	.	.	.	29.2	.	9.	.9	0.0	0.2	0.	.0	.0
Central	87.7	66.5	61.07	38.62	47.07	26.81	93.1	91.2	61.39	66.36	46.28	52.32
Kordufan	9 9	. 9	2. 0	.	9 .0	2.0	.	.09	.
Darfur	87.0	55.0	61.30	25.94	47.80	18.28	89.1	97.0	67.78	72.81	56.73	69.49
Gender												
Male	88.4	65.3	61.32	34.67	47.78	23.80	84.5	94.3	58.00	72.79	44.39	60.29
Female	83.7	82.8 51	81 27	52	38.51	18.39	85.2	89.9	57.11	68.50	43.16	57.29
Sector												
Agric.	86.4	63.8	66.60	33.11	43.10	22.60	88.9	94.9	60.36	74.13	45.34	62.35
Mining	--	--	59.30	29.99	45.84	17.99	--	--	--	--	--	--
Industry	89.6	69.0	63.07	37.85	49.02	25.86	86.0	91.8	60.68	67.34	47.75	53.63
Construct	--	--	66.38	38.66	54.11	28.37	--	--	78.55	40.80	63.53	23.18
Electricity	--	--	58.23	34.26	43.11	23.93	--	--	63.60	61.10	49.53	47.37
Commerce	--	--	61.44	37.69	47.43	25.68	--	--	55.34	66.58	42.49	53.55
Transport	--	--	63.15	33.84	49.49	23.71	--	--	61.75	68.64	49.10	54.87
Services	87.9	66.2	53.24	52.28	40.08	36.80	84.2	92.0	56.10	76.28	42.15	60.86
Education												
Illiterate	88.1	67.4	61.22	35.67	47.31	24.46	89.9	94.9	64.13	76.00	49.77	64.56
Read Writ	88.8	64.7	63.90	35.85	50.26	24.92	84.3	94.1	60.46	71.59	47.70	58.79
Primary	89.4	65.6	63.52	34.06	49.69	22.85	88.1	92.9	62.14	65.53	47.91	50.59
Intermediat e	86.7	56.6	59.89	29.91	46.40	20.73	84.6	91.0	56.19	62.28	42.34	47.39
Secondary	87.2	50.9	59.93	84.83	45.63	15.14	80.1	87.0	52.42	56.43	39.20	41.42
University	79.2	58.8	49.62	24.83	35.99	22.33	74.7	72.2	40.86	41.91	27.30	28.34

Source: Own data compiled from the Ministry of Manpower 1996 (Migration and Labour Force Survey1996:35).

(poverty as measured by the poverty incidence (P₀),poverty depth (P₁) and poverty severity (P₂)

Annex -1: Table 4.20

Infant And Child Mortality (per 1,000 live births)

State	Neonatal	Post- neonatal	Infant	Child	Under five
	Mortality	Mortality	Mortality	Mortality	Mortality
	Rate	Rate	Rate	(1-4 years)	Rate
Northern	26	30	56	23	78
Nile	29	28	57	26	81
Red Sea	50	66	116	56	165
Kassala	38	63	101	51	148
Al-Gadarif	31	36	67	54	117
Al-Gezira	21	22	43	17	59
Sinnar	24	26	51	50	98
White Nile	33	37	70	44	111
Blue Nile	46	55	101	80	172
Khartoum	27	42	69	38	103
North Kordufan	28	32	60	37	94
South Kordufan	38	57	95	57	147
West Kordufan	34	38	72	25	95
North Darfur	27	34	61	42	101
South Darfur	33	32	64	34	96
West Darfur	42	30	71	35	104
Northern Sudan	31	37	68	38	104
Urban	27	40	67	37	101
Rural	33	35	68	39	105
Male	37	36	73	37	108
Female	25	37	62	40	99
Indirect Method					
Southern Sudan	--	--	82	54	132
Male	--	--	85	57	138
Female	--	--	79	51	12

Source: Own data compiled from UNICEF(Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 2000 and Safe Motherhood Survey 1999
Quoted in WB 2003:9)

Annex -1: Table 4.21

Vaccinations of Children Age 12-23 Months In Northern Sudan 2000

		BCG	DPT1	DPT2	DPT3	Polio 0	Polio 1	Polio 2	Polio 3	Measles	All	None	% with health card	No. of Children
Sex	Male	65.2	66.6	56.9	42.6	21.8	74.9	65.4	45.3	52.6	26.1	21.5	26.7	1860
	Female	63.9	65.2	54.8	41.4	23.5	73.1	63.6	43	50.4	26.6	23.1	25.1	1757
State	Northern	69.5	72.9	63.6	51.7	38.1	73.7	65.3	39.8	61.9	21.2	22	23.7	118
	Nile	70.6	71.1	64.4	42.8	30.9	78.9	71.1	43.3	62.9	21.6	16.5	26.8	194
	Red Sea	54.5	52.9	47.1	41.3	36.4	60.3	55.4	33.9	44.6	20.7	36.4	14	121
	Kassala	70.8	70	64.4	47.4	38.3	71.1	66.8	27.7	60.5	17.4	25.3	8.3	253
	Al-Gadarif	66.2	66.7	57.5	42	34.2	75.8	65.3	39.3	50.7	21	19.2	16	219
	Al-Gezira	72.4	74.3	62.4	52.9	21.4	75.2	71.4	51.4	60.5	35.7	21.9	20.5	210
	Sinnar	58.7	63.5	49.5	26.9	7.7	68.8	60.6	41.8	45.7	18.3	25.5	21.2	208
	White Nile	70.6	74.9	62.4	44.1	16.3	82.6	76	54.8	63.5	31.1	13.6	30	367
	Blue Nile	79.4	77.7	71.3	60	20.8	81.4	75.2	64.2	60.6	43.1	17.2	50.4	355
	Khartoum	88.9	85.7	81	76.2	33.3	88.9	83.3	70.6	71.4	57.1	8.3	51.6	252
	North Kordufan	50.3	52.8	36.7	21.6	21.1	74.9	59.8	33.2	37.2	12.6	20.1	19.6	199
	South Kordufan	73.8	78.5	72.3	51.5	20.8	81.9	73.5	57.7	57.7	34.2	14.6	34.2	260
	West Kordufan	39.6	40.6	25.1	15.5	8	57.2	39.6	22.5	28.9	10.2	36.9	12.3	187
	North Darfur	68.8	70.9	61.2	44.7	12.2	78.5	65.4	52.7	46.8	31.2	18.6	32.1	237
South Darfur	40.7	41.9	27.2	19.9	20.3	70.7	48.8	24	28.5	12.6	26.8	12.2	246	
West Darfur	29.8	32.5	18.8	9.4	14.7	38.2	26.2	13.6	21.5	5.2	57.1	11	191	
Urban/Rural	Urban	75.5	74.9	67.1	53.7	32.4	79.4	72.8	52.7	62.5	34.9	16.8	34	1351
	Rural	58	60.5	49.2	35	16.8	70.8	59.6	39.1	45	21.3	25.5	21.1	2266
Mother's education level	None	54.3	56.5	45.6	32.2	17.6	67.3	56.2	36.1	40.8	20	28.8	20.5	2090
	Primary	77.4	78.2	68.6	53	26.6	82.6	75.4	55.2	62.8	33.3	14	33.1	1000
	Secondary	85	84.1	76.9	63.9	38.3	87.7	80.2	58.1	77.3	41	9	35.7	454
	Non-standard curriculum	55.4	55.4	49.2	36.9	13.8	67.7	58.5	36.9	43.1	21.5	29.2	23.1	65
	Missing	50	37.5	37.5	37.5	25	50	50	50	50	37.5	50	0	8
Total		64.5	65.9	55.9	42	22.6	74	64.6	44.2	51.5	26.4	22.3	25.9	3617

Source: Own data compiled from UNICEF (Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 2000, and Safe Motherhood Survey 1999 Quoted in WB 2003:15-16)

Birth Attendants for Women Giving Birth In
North Sudan 1999

					Untrained		
	Doctor	Health visitor	Village midwife	Trained TBA	Unt. TBA	Other	Unattended
Khartoum	42.9	22.3	10.8	16.8	0.3	0.1	6.8
Northern Kordufan	15.9	13.3	21.4	24.7	1.6	1.5	21.7
Urban	34.4	35.2	10.2	8.8	0.2	0.5	10.7
Rural	22	11.8	16.9	11.4	0.7	1.2	36.1
Mothers education							
No schooling	16.4	15.3	15.9	11.2	0.6	1	39.5
Primary	32.2	24.6	15.6	11.7	0.4	1.1	14.4
Secondary	50.6	24.3	9.8	6.8	0.4	0.6	7.5
Total	25.7	18.9	14.9	10.6	0.5	1	28.4

Source: Own data compiled from UNICEF,(Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 2000, and Safe Motherhood Survey 1999 quoted in WB 2003:13)

Measures of Internal Efficiency (1998- 1999)

Measurement	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade
Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Promotion rate %	82.7	84.5	83.4	80.9	78.3	78.4	78.1	60	82
Repetition Rate %	11	10	11.4	12.7	12	11	13.3	11.9	11.4
Dropout rate %	8.3	5.5	5.2	6.3	9.7	10.9	8.3	28.1	6.6
Survival rate b/ %	100	92.9	87.2	82.1	76.1	67.7	59.4	53.7	
Year input per graduate c/ 19.1									
Female	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Promotion rate a/ %	81.6	82.7	84.9	80	79.1	81	80	60.3	81.7
Repetition Rate %	11.8	11.7	11.3	13.4	11.9	10.4	13.1	12.5	12.7
Dropout rate %	6.6	6.6	3.8	6.5	9	8.1	6.9	27.3	3.6
Survival rate b/ %	100	92.5	86.6	84.3	77.9	70.7	63.6	58.5	
Year input per graduate c/ 17.9									
Male	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade	Grade
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Promotion rate a/ %	83.7	85.7	82.2	81.7	77.6	75.3	77	59.8	82.3
Repetition Rate %	10.3	8.7	11.4	12.2	12.1	11.4	13.5	11.4	10.9
Dropout rate %	6	5.5	6	6.2	10.4	13.2	9.5	28.9	6.8
Survival rate b/ %	100	93.3	67.7	80.3	47.6	65.9	56	49.8	
Year input per graduate c/ 20.3									

Source: Own data compiled from (Ministry of Education Quoted in WB 2003:35)

a/ % entering cohort completing grade and entering next highest grade.

b/ % of cohort enrolled in school including those repeating a grade.

c/ average number of years it takes to finish grade 9.

Annex-1: Table 4.24

Repetition Rate in Primary Education 1998/99 (percent) (WB:2003:33)

	Grade								Average grades 1 to 5
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Sudan Total (MF)	11	10	11.4	12.7	12	11	13.3	11.9	11.4
Male (M)	10.3	8.7	11.4	12.2	12.1	11	13.5	11.4	10.9
Female (F)	11.8	12	11.3	13.4	11.9	10	13.1	12.5	12
Total (MF)	11.9	10	11.6	13.6	10.6	13	13.2	13.8	11.7
Eastern Male (M)	8.9	3.2	9.7	9.7	6.9	12	12.6	12.6	7.7
Female (F)	15.2	18	14.3	18.2	15.3	15	13.8	15.6	16.3
Total (MF)	11.3	11	13.7	10.6	11.4	10	13.5	9.8	11.7
Central Male (M)	9.8	11	14.1	10.8	11.3	13	13.7	10.6	11.5
Female (F)	12.9	11	13.3	10.3	11.5	8.3	13.3	9.1	11.9
Total (MF)	0.8	2.3	2.9	3.7	3.3	2.6	12.2	3	2.6
Khartoum Male (M)	0.7	2.8	4.1	10.8	3.3	3.4	15.9	4.4	2.9
Female (F)	0.9	1.7	1.6	4.1	3.4	1.8	8.9	1.7	2.3
Total (MF)	17.7	15	16.3	17.1	18.9	16	19.1	18.5	16.9
Kordufan Male (M)	17.2	12	15	14.5	21.7	16	22.8	15.5	15.8
Female (F)	18.2	19	17.8	19.9	16	16	14.9	21.1	18.1
Total (MF)	14.1	13	12.4	15.8	15.7	13	13.3	10.7	14.2
Darfur Male (M)	15.9	14	13.7	16.9	16.7	15	12.5	9.8	15.3
Female (F)	12.1	13	10.8	14.6	14.7	12	14	11.6	12.9
Total (MF)	12.1	12	12.4	13	12.1	10	13.3	7.9	12.2
Northern Male (M)	13.2	13	13.7	13.1	12.6	13	11.3	1.1	13.1
Female (F)	10.8	9.8	11	12.8	11.6	9.2	15	13.7	11.2
Total (MF)	8.7	12	7.7	11	8.2	7.4	9.6	14.7	8.9
West Bahr El Gazal Male (M)	7.6	7.4	7.6	7.9	7.9	6.4	8.6	13.3	7.7
Female (F)	10.6	12	7.9	15.7	8.8	9.8	11.7	17.6	11.1
Total (MF)	7.1	5.6	11.5	13.6	13.6	13	12.6	16.9	10.6
Upper Nile Male (M)	4.6	3.6	11.6	14.8	14.8	13	13.3	17.7	10.2
Female (F)	11	8.6	11.5	12	12	13	11.4	15.7	11.1
Total (MF)	9	6.8	12.2	13.2	11.7	12	11.8	17.5	10.7
Equatoria Male (M)	6.3	6.1	12.1	13.8	12.8	11	14.4	21	10.4
Female (F) 1	12	7.8	12.4	12.4	10	12	15.2	11.8	11.1
Total (MF)	11.6	12	12.3	14.8	13.1	13	14.3	10.3	12.7
Urban areas Male (M)	11.2	11	12.7	14.4	13.4	14	15.2	11.4	12.5
Female (F)	11.9	12	11.9	15.2	12.9	12	13.3	9.2	12.9
Total (MF)	15.7	13	13.2	12.3	12.3	11	11.5	16	13.4
Rural areas Male (M)	15.4	13	13.7	12.7	12.1	11	11.9	14.6	13.4
Female (F)	16.2	14	12.6	11.9	12.7	11	11	17.7	13.5

Source: Own data compiled from (Ministry of Education Quoted in WB 2003: 35)

Annex -1: Table 4.25

Gross and Net Enrolment Ratios in Basic Education 1998/1999

	Enrolment in official basic education								
	Total enrolment (all ages)			School age			Official School	GER (gross enrolment rate)	NER (net enrolment rate)
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Age Population		
Sudan Total (MF)	2,976,719	2,863,152	113,567	2,611,470	2,502,661	108,809	6,539,234	45.5	39.9
Male (M)	1,606,066	1,546,470	59,596	1,428,243	1,369,964	58,278	3,335,994	48.1	42.8
Female (F)	1,370,653	1,316,681	53,972	1,183,227	1,132,696	50,531	3,203,240	42.8	36.9
Total (MF)	287,780	287,780	12,226	236,596	227,868	8,728 7	49,126	38.4	31.6
Eastern Male (M)	165,022	161,656	3,366	132,386	129,734	2,652	384,215	43	34.5
Female (F)	134,984	126,124	8,860	104,209	98,133	6,076	364,911	37	28.6
Total (MF)	935,465	885,501	49,964	820,316	771,259	49,057	1,396,603	67	58.7
Central Male (M)	502,155	477,005	25,150	444,477	420,104	24,373	710,459	70.7	62.6
Female (F)	433,310	408,496	24,814	375,839	351,155	24,684	686,144	63.2	54.8
Total (MF)	564,053	564,053	--	498,677	498,677	--	765,914	73.6	65.1
Khartoum Male (M)	287,355	287,355	--	263,287	263,287	--	389,527	73.8	67.6
Female (F)	276,698	276,698	--	235,389	235,389	--	376,387	73.5	62.5
Total (MF)	401,641	395,664	5,977	343,106	337,556	5,550	909,154	44.2	37.3
Kordofan Male (M)	215,037	211,305	3,732	191,138	187,828	3,310	463,249	64.4	41.3
Female (F)	186,604	184,359	2,245	151,968	149,728	2,240	445,905	41.8	34.1
Total (MF)	382,544	381,133	1,411	338,079	337,321	758	1,325,240	28.9	25.5
Darfur Male (M)	224,770	223,847	923	193,938	193,410	528	673,901	33.4	28.8
Female (F)	157,774	157,287	487	144,140	143,911	230	651,339	24.2	22.1
Total (MF)	255,157	255,157	--	249,129	249,129	--	293,450	87	84.9
Northern Male (M)	130,188	130,188	--	127,914	127,914	--	149,319	87.2	85.7
Female (F)	124,969	124,969	--	121,215	121,215	--	144,131	86.7	84.1
Total (MF)	137,853	93,864	43,989	125,568	80,851	44,717	1,099,747	12.5	11.4
Southern Male (M)	81,539	55,115	26,424	75,102	47,686	27,416	565,324	14.4	13.3
Female (F)	56,314	38,749	17,565	50,466	33,165	17,301	534,423	10.5	9.4
Total (MF)	2,232,868	2,145,996	86,872	2,144,387	1,841,712	302,675	4,374,748	51	49
Urban areas Male (M)	1,200,573	1,155,479	45,094	1,145,688	1,001,859	143,829	2,203,657	54.5	52
Female (F)	1,032,294	990,517	41,777	998,699	839,854	158,845	2,171,091	47.5	46
Total (MF)	743,851	717,156	26,695	204,827	168,556	36,272	2,164,486	34.4	9.5
Rural areas Male (M)	405,493	390,991	14,501	127,162	106,964	20,198	1,090,300	37.2	11.7
Female (F)	338,359	326,165	12,194	77,666	61,592	16,074	1,074,187	31.5	7.2

Source: Own data compiled from (Ministry of Education Quoted in WB 2003:22)

Students Enrolled in Government Universities According to International
Classification for Education for the Academic Years 1990/1991-2000/2000

Discipline	95/96		96/97		97/98		99/00		2000/0	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Education	7083	10519	8514	11787	11895	7995	8287	14696	9637	16976
Humanities & Arts	7794	8292	14204	11707	10441	13327	12866	18836	10781	15271
Social Sciences, Business & Law	12367	8851	33861	27357	32740	27901	30942	33742	30950	33751
Science	2448	2255	5201	5380	5630	4408	6181	5356	7040	5841
Engineering, Manufacturing & Construction	8517	2017	16321	6142	10978	3792	9422	4750	13982	5420
Agriculture	6026	5747	7708	6805	6987	2327	4023	4704	5363	6123
Health & Welfare	5070	4155	8152	7828	9908	6622	6400	7997	8596	11256
Services	327	365	212	318	243	248	537	378	612	417
Grand Total	49632	42201	94173	77324	88822	66620	78658	90459	86961	95055

Source Own data compiled from Government of Sudan: , General Directorate of Planning: Statistical Data on Higher Education
(Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research 1990/1991-2000/2001 Quoted in WB 2003:27)

Annex -1: Table 4.27

Percent of population above 15 years that is literate

State	Male	Female	Total
Northern	72.2	71	71.5
Nile	71.9	71.5	71.7
Red Sea	52.8	51.3	52
Kassala	38.1	37.8	38
Al-Gadarif	43.2	43.3	43.3
Al-Gezira	59.5	56.7	58.6
Sinnar	50.1	49.9	50
White Nile	51.8	51.4	51.6
Blue Nile	38.4	35.2	36.7
Khartoum	75.9	73.9	74.9
Northern Kordufan	41	39.6	40.2
Southern Kordufan	36.1	34.6	35.2
Western Kordufan	34.9	34	34.4
Northern Darfur	48.4	47.8	48.1
Southern Darfur	42.5	39	40.7
Western Darfur	27.5	24.6	25.9
Urban	67	65.2	66
Rural	38.8	38.1	38.4
Age			
15-24	57.2	53	54.8
25-34	52	45.2	47.8
35-44	41.9	46.3	44.1
45-54	43.7	54.5	48.7
55-64	54.4	51	53
65+	54.9	39.6	49.3
Total	50.6	49.2	49.9

Source: Own data compiled from (Ministry of Education Quoted in WB 2003:25)

Annex -1: Table 4.28

Drinking Water Sources in Northern Sudan (percent of population)

	Main source of water							
	Piped into		Deep	Dug Well/				Missing
	Dwelling	Public tap	Well/pump	bucket	River/canal	Rainwater	Others	Total
Northern	50.8	4.3	15.8	9.8	12.8	--	6.4	0.1
Nile	42.3	3.7	12.2	13.5	24.7	--	3.4	0.2
Red Sea	25.6	18.3	28.3	25.8	1.5	--	0.5	--
Kassala	22.6	16	21	6.4	23.1	1.5	8.7	0.8
Al-Gadarif	12.6	18.8	27.7	13.9	13.8	9.4	3.6	0.2
Al-Gezira	47.2	14.1	16.6	6.6	12	0.2	3.3	--
Sinnar	30.2	11.3	32.4	0.6	8.1	9.3	7.6	0.4
White Nile	23.1	5.5	10.3	12.4	28.5	7.7	11.8	0.8
Blue Nile	12.3	2.1	9.3	2.1	33.2	27.9	13	0
Khartoum	59.8	3.5	29.5	2.4	0.2	1.6	2.9	--
North Kordufan	16.3	5.3	20.5	25.4	2.2	13.2	17.1	--
South Kordufan	0.9	1.7	76.6	7.1	0.1	4.9	8.6	--
West Kordufan	2.2	2.1	62.8	6.9	2.1	19.7	4.1	0.1
North Darfur	10.7	3.1	42.1	40.7	0.4	1.9	1.2	--
South Darfur	9.8	6.9	32.9	26.8	8.7	13.4	1.5	--
West Darfur	9.7	3.4	16.1	50.6	1.1	18.5	0.7	0
Urban	44.3	10.5	24.6	8.3	3.8	0.5	7.7	0.3
Rural	10.7	5.4	30.9	18.9	16	13	5	0.1
Total	24	7.4	28.4	14.7	11.2	8.1	6	0.2

Source: Own data compiled from (UNICEF, Multiple Indicators Cluster survey 2000 and Safe Motherhood Survey 1999
Quoted in WB:2003:10)

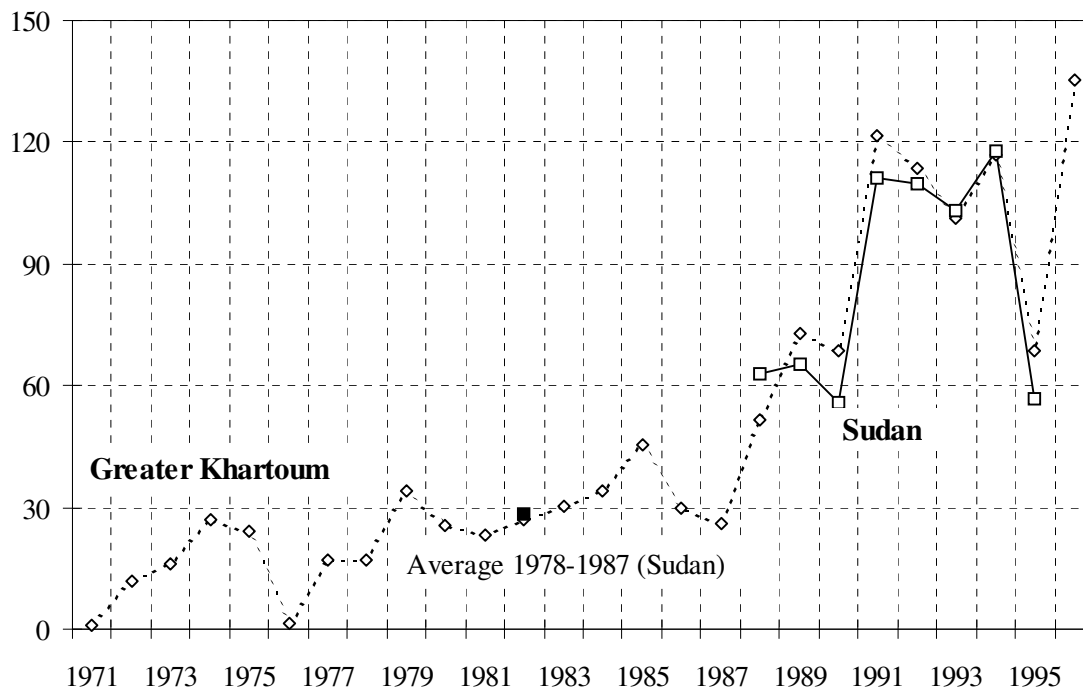
Annex -1: Table 4.29

Excreta Disposal in Northern Sudan (percent of population)

	Flush to Sewage System	Flush to Specific tank	Traditional pit latrine	Soak away pit	Others	Missing	No facilities	Total
Northern	--	7.7	69.2	1.6	1.6	--	19.9	100
Nile	--	12.3	72.6	0.7	0.7	0.1	13.5	100
Red Sea	--	20.9	26.1	4.2	0.7	0.2	47.9	100
Kassala	--	11.6	34.3	1.2	0.3	0.5	52	100
Al-Gadarif	--	5	31.7	3.1	0	0	60.1	100
Al-Gezira	--	4.2	51.7	2.1	1.7	0.2	40	100
Sinnar	--	2.7	46.6	5.3	2.1	0.7	42.7	100
White Nile	--	4.8	45.7	3.7	2.2	0.5	43.2	100
Blue Nile	--	3.5	56	3.2	0.4	0.8	36	100
Khartoum	1.1	11.27	3.8	0.9	3.1	0.4	9.5	100
North Kordufan	--	2.9	31.4	1.9	1	0.1	62.6	100
South Kordufan	--	2.4	48.7	0.3	1.4	40.9	46.4	100
West Kordufan	--	1.6	70.6	0.9	0.1	0.8	25.9	100
North Darfur	--	8	47.7	1.7	8.2	0.2	34.2	100
South Darfur	--	5.6	56.3	1.3	0.3	1.6	35	100
West Darfur	--	5.5	41.8	0.9	0.1	0.1	51.6	100
Urban	0.1	15	61.6	3.8	2.3	0.4	16.7	100
Rural	0	1.3	44	1	0.9	0.5	52.3	100
Total	0.1	6.7	50.9	2.1	1.5	0.5	38.3	100

Source: Own data compiled from (UNICEF(Multiple Indicators Cluster survey 2000 and Safe Motherhood Survey 1999 quoted in W.B 2003:11)

Annual Inflation Rates , Greater Khartoum And Sudan, 9 - 99

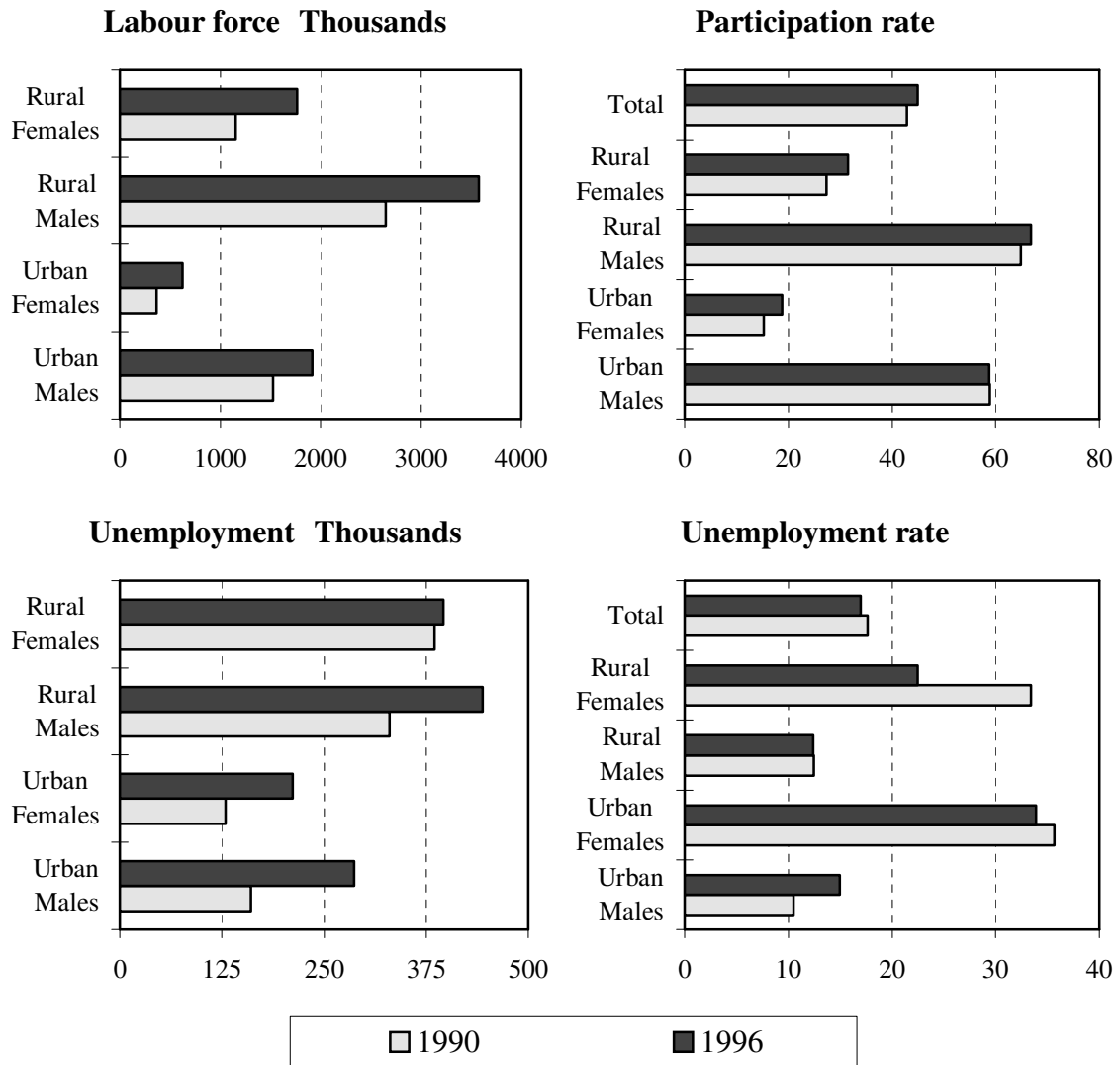


Sources: Sudan: IMF, *World Economic Outlook*, October 1996

Greater Khartoum (Base Jan. 1990 = 100): Central Bureau of Statistics, as reported in the National Council for Economic Planning (NCEP), *Macroeconomic Performance Report*, November 1997

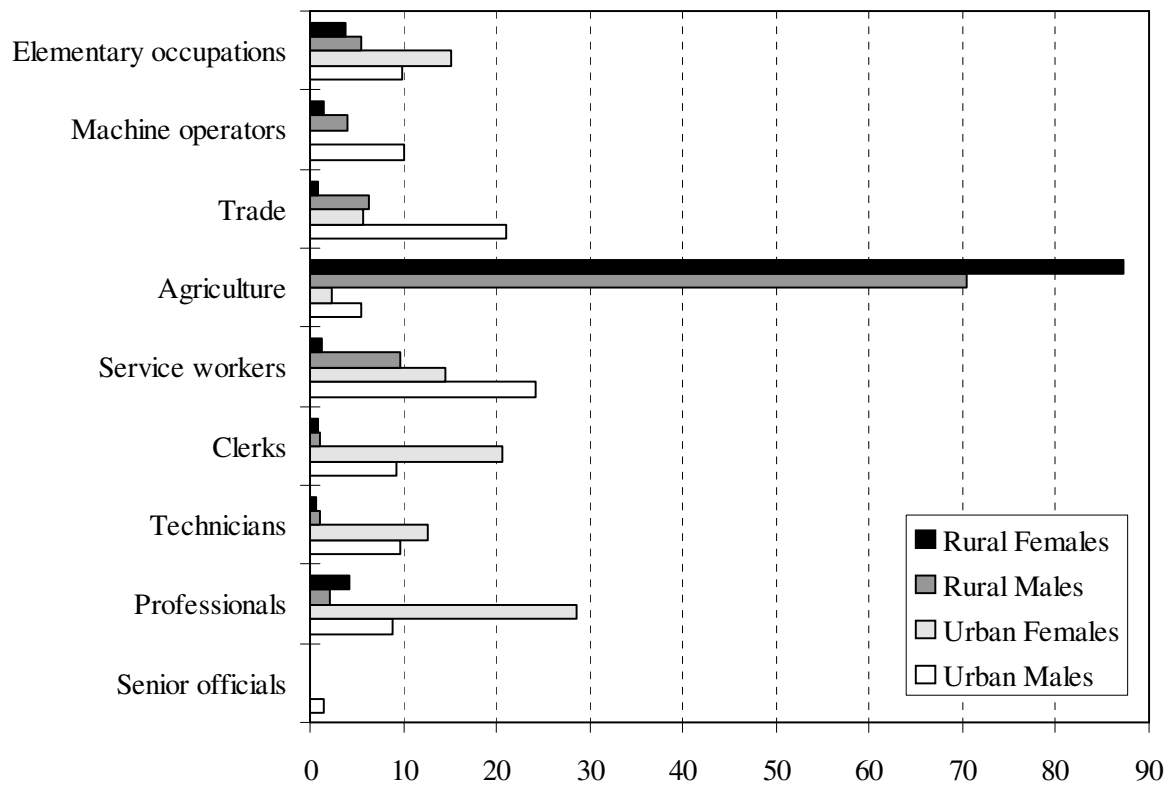
Source: Own data compiled from (Sudan IMF, *World Economic Outlook* 1996 Quoted in UNDP 1998:11)

**Participation In Economic Activity And Unemployment, North Sudan,
Individuals 0 By Gender And Urban/Rural Residence,
1990 And 1996**



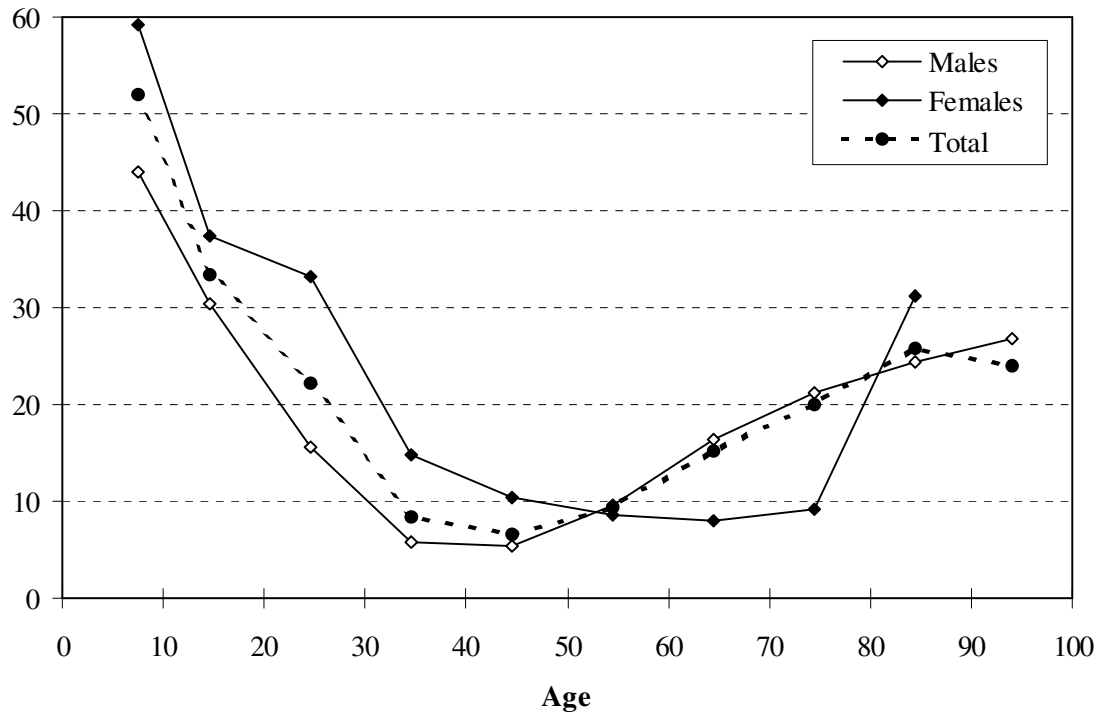
Source: Own data compiled from (Sudan IMF, World Economic Outlook 1996 Quoted in UNDP 1998:12)

**Occupational Structure of the Labour Force, North Sudan,
Individuals by Gender and Urban/Rural Residence, 99**



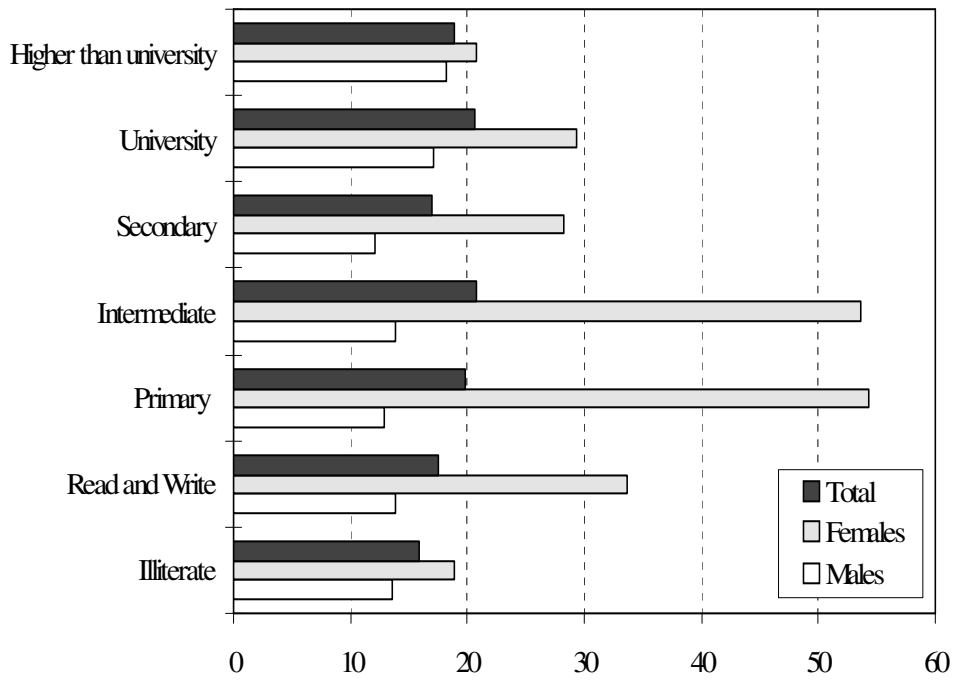
Source: Own data compiled from (Sudan IMF, World Economic Outlook
1996 Quoted in UNDP 1998:14)

Unemployment Rate by Age and Gender, Individuals , North Sudan, 99



Source: Own data compiled from (Sudan IMF, World Economic Outlook
1996 Quoted in UNDP 1998:16)

**Unemployment Rate by Educational Attainment and Gender,
Individuals , North Sudan, 99**



Source: Own data compiled from (Sudan IMF, World Economic Outlook
1996 Quoted in UNDP 1998:17)

Annex-1: Chart 6.1

Matrix Plan for the Economic Development Secretariat - Sudanese Women General Unions: 999- 200

S. No.	Name of The project	Project Description	Duration	Target/ Family	Implementing Org.	Location	Cost m/ Dinnar	Financing Resources	Expected results
1	Savings and Microcredit Projects	Projects will be implemented in groups In agriculture & animal husbandry (sheep raising, crops production & other small Scale enterprises	One year	800 families	SWGU	all 12 states	4.5	SudaTel & Ministry of Finance	800 poor families out of poverty cycle. Skills building, Revolving of Fund to benefit same number of women
2	Carpet Production	Training Groups of Women in Carpet industry with assistance from technical cadre from Iran & Turkey at the states Where raw materials are available	One year	100 families	SWGU	Northern Kordufan, Northern Darfur & Read Sea	10	Ministry of Finance	Training women in carpet making and production of carpet for local & International markets . To take100 families out of poverty cycle.
		Introducing new technology in preservation of food, vegetables, fruits & herbal plants (Drying) during harvesting seasons				Southern Darfur, , Southern Kordufan& 3 Southern states: Malakal & Bar Al Gazal &Bahr Al Jabal	75	Ministry of Finance & other Sources	1000 poor families out of poverty cycle Skills building in food processing
3	Food Processing		One year	1000 families	SWGU				

4	Establishment of Women Marketing Centres	Establishment of women marketing centres At Kordufan, Darfur and Read Sea States	One year	All productive women	SWGU	Obied, Nialha & Port Sudan	250	Ministry of Finance & other Sources	Improving women the quality of women products and marketing the production locally & internationally
5	Establishment of Production Units	The projects consist of development of the production units through organising women in groups and building their skills to improve The quality of the products and compete The local & international markets	One year	260	SWGU	Nialha, Al Jinana, Obied and Port Sudan	100	Ministry of Finance & other Sources	Building the women skills to improve and market the products locally & internationally
6	Establishment of SWGU Training Centre (Mama centre)	Establishment of women centre for capacity building of the SWGU staff at national and state levels & other target groups for management & administration of their Projects.	One year	500	SWGU	Khartoum	300	Ministry of Finance & other Sources	Capacity building of the SWGU staff at national and state levels& other target groups

7	Rotated Restaurants	Each week worked out by one family returns goes to the family	One year	112ID Poor Families from Southern States	SWGU	Jabal Awlia, Souk Mayo, Al Kalakla-Khartoum	6	Ministry of Finance	Poverty Eradication
8	Free Treatment Health Centres	Free treatments for widows & Orphans	One year	all widows & orphans	M of H & Charity Sudanese Women Organisation	Khartoum State	3.8	Ministry of Finance	Social Collaboration/ Healthy Families Healthy Environment
9	Small Scale Production Projects	Ownership of Assets of Production (Fridge, Poultry & Ice Cream Machines)	One year	90 Divorcees & poor women	Ministry of Social Welfare & Women Skills Development Association	Khartoum & Omdurman	2.8	Ministry of Finance	Increase Income & contribution to GDP, Self Reliance, Poverty Eradication
10	Dry Fish Projects	Ownership of Assets of Production	One year	65 ID Poor Families from Southern States	Al Aa'salah Association	Jabal Awlia-Khartoum	8	Ministry of Finance	Self Reliance, Poverty Eradication
11	Rotated Cafeteria	Each week worked out by one family returns goes to the family	One year	7ID Poor Families from Southern States	Al Aa'salah Association	Jabal Awlia-Khartoum	4	Ministry of Finance	Increase the family Income Self Reliance, Poverty Eradication

12	Goats Raising	Ownership of Assets of Production	One year	50 families	SWGU	Khartoum	3	Ministry of Finance	Improvement of Social & Economic Conditions
13	Rehabilitation of Health Unit	T0 Rehabilitate a Health Unit	One year	ID Poor Families	SWGU	A'aly Al Nil - South	3	Ministry of Finance	Improvement of Health Conditions
14	Health Insurance	Free treatments for widows & low income families	One year	250 Families	SWGU	Khartoum	3	Ministry of Finance	Improvement of Health Conditions of Orphans' Families
15	Fruit Tree Project	Ownership of Assets of Production Of a free fruit tree for each house	One year	300 Families	Horticulture & Bit Al Ballad Association	Khartoum	7.1	Ministry of Finance	Cooperation between families, create productive families
16	Caring for University Student	Care and assist university student coming from other states to Khartoum	One year	500 students	Dahwa'a Islamic Organisation	Khartoum	3	Ministry of Finance	Protection of university students from bad behaviour, improve the educational level
17	Rehabilitation of Women Development Centres	Rehabilitation & Equipping of Women Development Centres	One year	Women	Dahwa'a Islamic Organisation	Jabal Al Nuba - Southern Kordufan	6	Ministry of Finance	Raising awareness of women' Social & Economic role.
18	Rehabilitation of Social Development Centres	Rehabilitation & Equipping of Social Development Centres	One year	All people	International Women Union	Khartoum & Omdurman	3.5	Ministry of Finance	Create Urbanized Society
19	Dress Making Factory	Dress Making factory	One year	110 poor families	Mihera Charity Association	Al Kalakla - Khartoum	26.7	Ministry of Finance	Building skills in sewing & Poverty Reduction
20	Cows Raising	Ownership of assets of milk production	One year	210 poor families	Mihera Charity Association	Um Dahwa'a - Khartoum	2.2	Ministry of Finance	Achieving Sustain income for the family Improve the nutrition conditions

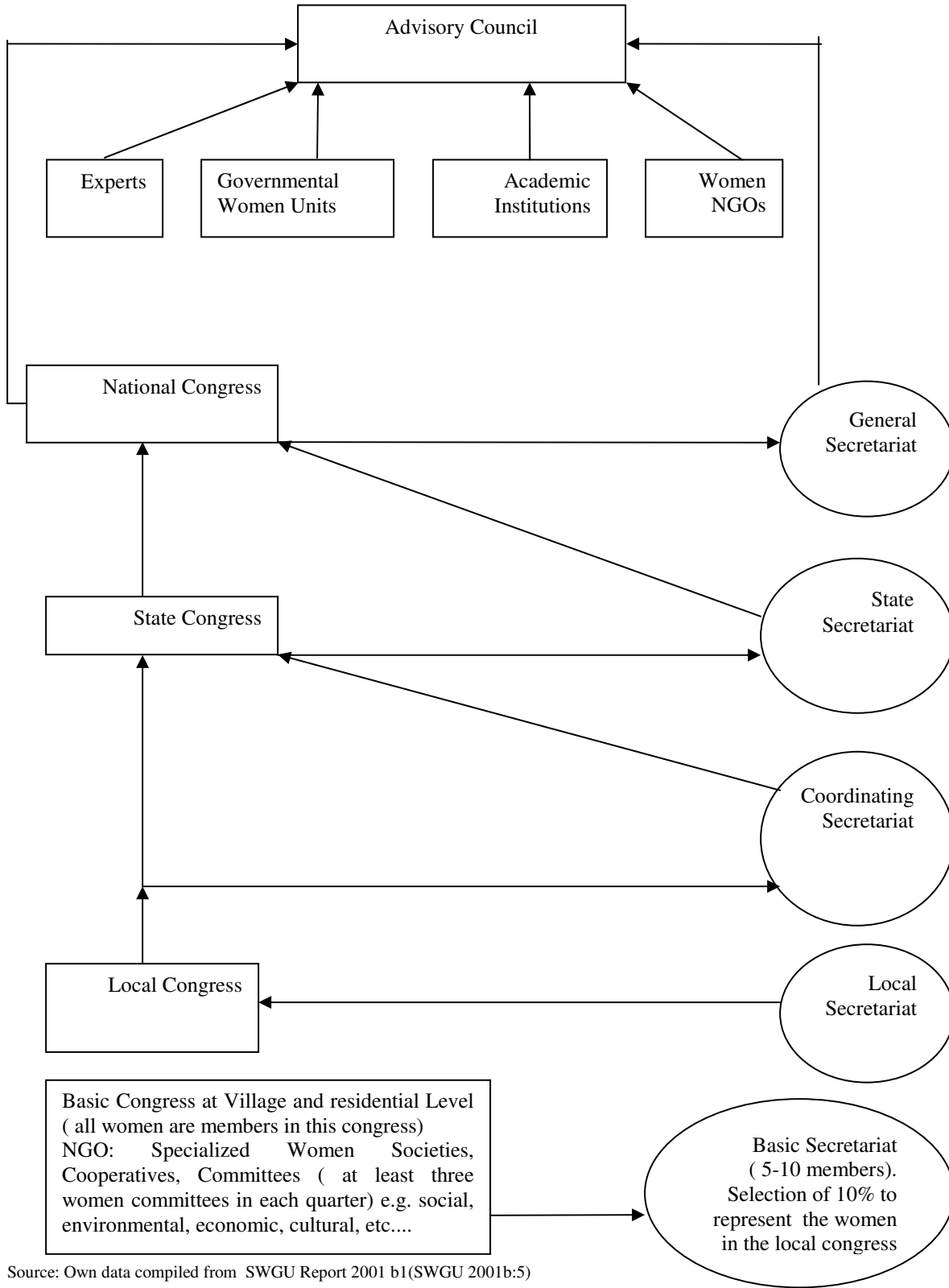
21	Taking care of Discharged Female Prisoners	Taking care of Discharged Female Prisoners	One year	400 prisoners	Sudanese Association for Female Prisoners	All states	4	Ministry of Finance	Practicing respectable jobs-Having Society Free of Bad Behaviour
22	Taking Care of Female Prisoners' Children	Provision of one meals For Female Prisoners' Children, Assist Lactating Prisoners	One year	Prisoners' Children	Sudanese Association for Female Prisoners	All states	4	Ministry of Finance	Prevent homelessness & Improve the nutrition Conditions
23	Small Scale Projects	The projects consist of establishment of production Centers and financing of Small scale enterprises	One year	146	Shahid Organisation	Omdurman- Al Thowra Marzog	12.9	Ministry of Finance	Reduction of Drudgery, self sufficiency, family stability achievement, raising awareness of Production.
24	Handicrafts Work Projects	Ownership of assets of Production: such as leather. , handicrafts works etc.	One year	50	Southern Women Corporation for development & peace	South: Waw, Juba, Malakal Kaboita & Bantu - Jabal Awlia: Khartoum	3.25	Ministry of Finance	Self reliance, creating productive families
25	Small Scale Projects	Ownership of assets of production: such as Donkey Cart for water services, Pastry Machines, trading projects	One year	60 families	Women Solidarity Association	Khartoum -Rural areas	10	Ministry of Finance	Reduction of Poverty creating productive families
26	Leather Bags Industry	Ownership of assets of production	One year	200 families	Bint Khoild	Darfur(Al Fashir)	15.6	Ministry of	Reduction of Poverty

		for leather bags industry			Association for Development	& North (Shandi)		Finance	creating productive families
27	Flour Mills Projects	Ownership of assets of Flour Mills	One year	300	Women Development Association	Al Gardarif, Waw & Benito	14	Ministry of Finance	Sustain family income & Self reliance
28	Telecom Centre & Tire Repair Projects	Ownership of assets of Telecom Centre & Tire Repair	One year	10 families	Ahl Al Khir Association	Khartoum- Al Gezira	7	Ministry of Finance	Sustain family income & Self reliance
29	Vocational Training Centre for Female Prisoners	Ownership of assets of production	One year	150	Bzrat Al Khir Association & Prisons Administration	Female Prisoners	5	Ministry of Finance	Sustain family income & Self reliance Creating productive families Prevention of criminal behaviour
30	Student Dress & One Meal Projects	Provision of school dress and one meal for the poor students	One year	5000	School Friends Association & Ministry of Education	North (Atbara) & Kaboita Sodari & Khartoum	10	Ministry of Finance	5000 poor students out of poverty cycle, Improvement of Educational Level. family stability, creating educated & Productive women.
31	Adult Literacy Projects	Adult literacy and Handicrafts work	One year	3600	Fatima Bint Jabber Association & Literacy Administration:	Juba, Malakal & Kassala	7	Ministry of Finance	Creating educated & productive women

32	Gourd Arts Production	Ownership of assets of production Tools for gourd production	One year	220	Jibal Al Nuba Female Association	Kadogli- Al Dalanj	4.2	Ministry of Finance	Sustain family income & Self reliance Creating productive families
33	Midwifery Training Project	Building Capacity of midwives	One year	400	Rufida Association & Ministry of Health	Kordufan: Harat Al Wiz Al Fula, Kadogli & Al Dalanj	8	Ministry of Finance	Reproductive Family Health
34	People Mobile Health Clinics	The projects consist of People Mobile Clinics for poor people	One year	5 villages	Al Afia Association & Ministry of Health	Sidon, Abu Hammed, Sinja Awiel & Juba	20	Ministry of Finance	Health care & free treatment
35	Female Orphans Care Projects	Taking care of female orphan children	One year	100	Babiker Badri Association	Khartoum	2	Ministry of Finance	Reduction of homeless cases, Stability & Improvement of educational level
36	Small Scale Production Projects	Poultry & hand crafts work	One Year	600	Al Batool Association	Jabal Awlia (IDP camps), Shandi , Khartoum	10	Ministry of Finance	Creation of productive families, sustain family income & self reliance

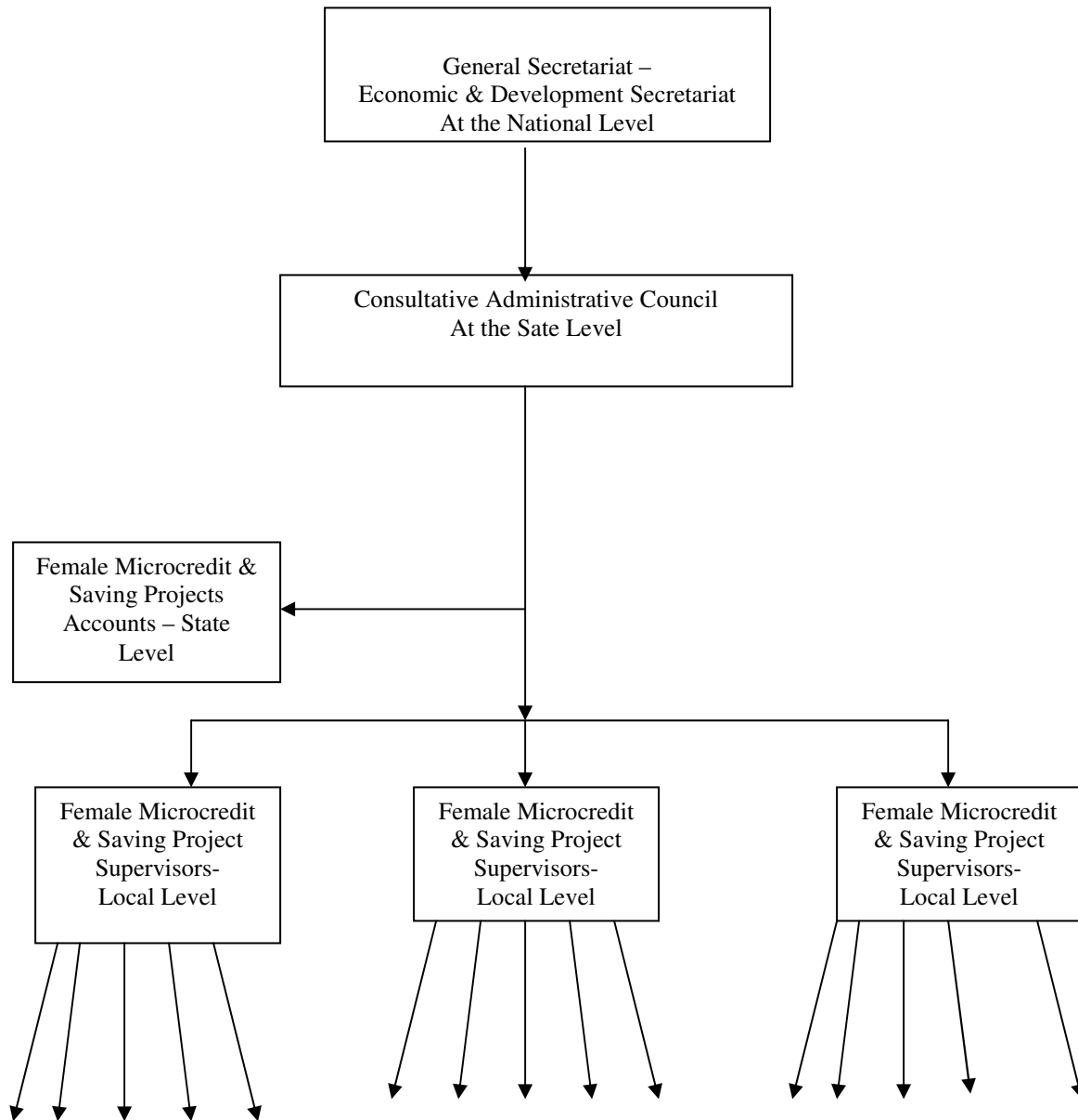
Source: Own data compiled from SWGU Report (SWGU 1999:8-14)

**SUDANESE WOMEN GENERAL UNION
ORGANIGRAM**



Source: Own data compiled from SWGU Report 2001 b1(SWGU 2001b:5)

**HIERARCHAL STRUCTURE FOR THE
SUDANESE WOMEN GENERAL UNION
FEMALE SAVINGS MICROCREDIT PROJECTS**



Female entrepreneur's savings and microcredit projects at the village and residential level

Source: Own data collection and presentation, 2006 based on the Item No.(61) E Sudan Decree 1989 the SWGU issued for this order. SWGU Reports (SWGU 2000a:4)

Annex-2: Questionnaire

Questionnaire Part

Impact Of Microcredit Project On Women Vulnerability and Empowerment
Entrepreneurs

a. Personal Household Intra-relationships Information

. Name of female entrepreneur:

Name of the State

Name of the Locality

Name of the village

..

2Place of born:

. Age of female entrepreneur:

. Marital Status

Married

Single

Widow

Divorce

. Education:

Illiterate

Khalawi

Literate

Primary

Elementary

Secondary

University

. Household Head:

Male household headed: (Specify) ..

Female household headed: (Specify) .

Children household headed: (Specify) .

Jointly household headed: (Specify)

. Please Provide Details on The Composition of The Household

(Persons living within the household)

Persons	Age		Education level	Employment Status			Kind of job
	M	F		Employed	Un-employed	Under Employed.	
Husband							
Wife							
Children:							
1.							
2.							
3.							
4							
5							
6							
7							
8							
9							
10							
11							
Mother in-law							
Father in-law							
Mother							
Father							
Other(specify):							
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							

9. Please Provide Details on Source of Household Current Income after Starting Getting Loan from SWGU

(Sources of current income that keep the household sustain)

Source of income	Amount (SD) /week	Duration	Seasonality fluctuation in income												Action taken to sustain the household during the low income season
			J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	

0. Is the income sufficient to satisfy your household needs

Yes No

. If the answer no what do you do

2. How do you manage income during low income seasons

..
.
.
.

. Please Provide Details on the Household and the Microcredit Cost

(Smoothing Income & Expenditure Fluctuation)

Kinds of expenditure	Cost – Sudanese Dinnar/ per week		Responsibility for provision of expenditure		Decision making		Seasonality fluctuation in expenditure												Action taken by household to smooth income & expenditure	
	Before starting the loan	After starting the loan																		
Monthly expenditure on:			M	F	M	F	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D		
Food/ Sorghum																				
Meat / vegetable																				
Schoolfor children																				
Clothes																				
Medicines																				
Salaries of workers in business																				
Housing/Shelter																				
Drinks																				
Ceremonies (Marriage, delivery etc..)																				
Other (if any please specify):																				
b. Expenditure on asset/ property																				
Building house																				
Buying land																				
Buying other assets																				
Other (if any please specify):																				
c. Expenditure on microcredit business																				
1. Rent																				
2. Tax																				
3. Raw material																				
4.Eelectricity																				
5.water																				
6. Transport																				
Other specify																				

. Please Provide Details on the Household Assets

(Protecting & developing household assets)

Kind of household Assets	Who get access to it			Who own/control it			Assets		
	M	F	Joined (specify)	M	F	Joined (specify)	Developed by microcredit	Already Exist Protected& Improved by microcredit	but Improved
a. Financial assets:									
1.Cash									
2.Liquid saving									
3. Loan									
4.Pension									
5.Regular remittance									
6. Gifts									
Other (if any please specify)									
7									
8									
9									
10									
b. Physical assets:									
1.Livestock									
2.Gold/ Jewellery									
3. Raw material									
4.Tools									
5.Vehicle									
6. Bicycle									
7. Building									
8. Land									
9. Furniture									
10. Equipment									
Other (if any please specify)									
11									
12									
13									
14									
15									

. Please Provide Details on the Household Assets

(Protecting & developing household assets)

Kind of household assets	Who get access to it			Who take decision			Social Assets	
	M	F	Joined (Specify)	M	F	Joined (Specify)	Developed as result of microcredit	Already exist but strengthen by microcredit
c. Social Assets								
.Membership of groups Specify a b c.. d ..								
2. Relationship of Trust(Specify) a b c								
3. Access to wide institution of society (Specify) a b c								
4. Freedom from mobility (Specify) a b. c d								
5. Freedom from violence (Specify) a b. c								
6 Other (if any please specify) a b c d								

b. Enterprise Household Intra-relationships Information

. What are the reasons that motivated you to start the business

2. What are the reasons that attracted you to start the business

. What kind of microcredit project you operate

Agriculture Project

Please specify the economic activities adopted for income creation:

.
.

Animal Husbandry Project

Please specify the economic activities adopted for income creation:

.
.

Industrial Project

Please specify the economic activities adopted for income creation:

.

Services Project

Please specify the economic activities adopted for income creation:

Other (please specify)

Please specify the economic activities adopted for income creation:

. When did you first start your project

1960s

1970s

1980s

1990s

2000s

. How much capital / investment did you spend when you first start your business

. Who initiated your project's idea

Inherited project

Self initiative ideas

Family member's idea

Other (Please specify)

. Who own the business

My self

My husband

Joined (me & my husband)

My brother

Other (please specify)

. How did you know about the SWGU microcredit project

Mass media

SWGU basic & local secretariats

Relative & friends

Other (Please specify)

9. How did you approach the bank

Through the SWGU

My self

Other (Please specify)

0. Which bank has funded your project

Credit & Social development bank

Agriculture Bank

Charity Islamic Fund

Other (Please specify)

. What sort of loan did you receive

Cash

Kind

2. What mode of the loan you receive

Murabaha (purchase or resale of debt)

Musharka (joint partnership)

Qard Hassan (Loan without interest)

Mudharaba (agency joint venture)

. Describe the procedures you follow in order to obtain the credit

. How did you use the Microcredit / loan

For the same purpose

Other purposes

If for other purposes please specify

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8

. How much did you receive/ borrow

. Which cycle of the loan is currently running

.How many Microcredit projects / businesses do you Operating so far

.What are your expectations that have been met by the Microcredit project

9. What are the expectations that have not been met by the Microcredit project

20 What strategies do you use for saving

1. Bank
2. Post Office Saving
3. Sandoq
4. Relatives ..
5. Friends .
6. Middleman/ traders ..
7. Other (if any please specify)
8. ..
9. ..

2 . How much do you save

Compulsory		Voluntary		Total	
Sudanese Pound		Sudanese Pound		Sudanese Pound	
Per week	Per month	Per week	Per month	Per week	Per month

22. Is the amount of savings convenient compared to your enterprise

Yes No

2 . If not what strategies are you using to increase the amount of income saving

..
.

2 . What Types of Key Social Contacts Management Skills You Received

Types of skills, Knowledge, training, experience contact developed through the Microcredit project)

Types of Human Capital/ Management Skills				Duration	Social Contacts			
Knowledge	Training	Education	Experience		Kinds of contact	With whom	How often	Response Received

2 . What are the constraints facing your microcredit project

2 . What type of strategies did you use to solve these problems

2 . What Types of crisis did your household facing during the last ten years

Functions of pressures as root causes for vulnerability / poverty

Kind of crisis	Time series				Strategy adopted to	
	This year	Last year	5 years ago	10 years ago	Respond to crisis	manage the crisis
1. Diseases						
2. Marriage						
3. Medical operation						
4. Send back from abroad						
5. Litigation						
6. Expences to finance overseas employment						
7. Accident						
8. Loss in business						
9. Destruction of dwellings						
10. Death of livestock						
11. Death of earning member						
12. Flood						
13. Drought						
Other (if any please specify):						
14.						
13.						
14.						
15.						
16						
17.						
19						

2 . What types of risks facing the household and that might influence your business

Kinds of demands for household production / services - Functions of pressures as root causes for vulnerability

Kind of risk/ demands	Cost/ Amount (SD)	Seasonality												Strategy adopted	
		J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	To respond to risk	To manage the risk
A. Demand for Labour															
Labour – within the family															
1. Male Female															
2. Male Female															
3. Male Female															
4. Male Female															
Labour – out side the family															
1. Male Female															
2. male Male															
• male Male															
4. male Male															
5. male Male															
B. Demand for raw materials															
1.															
2.															
3.															
C. Demand for															

2 . What kinds of life-cycle risks did your household facing and that affect your business

Functions of pressures as root causes for vulnerability

Kind of risk of crisis	Time series				Strategy adopted to	
	This year	Last year	5 years ago	10 years ago	respond to crisis	manage the crisis
A. Development of household members						
1. Education of girls						
2. Education of boys						
3. Health & treatment						
4. Food security						
Other specify						
5						
6						
7						
8						
B. Marriage						
1. Boys marriage						
2. Girls Marriage						
Other specify						
3						
4						
5						
C. Delivery:						
1. Delivery of boy						
2. Delivery of girl						
Other specify						
3						
4						
5						
D. Circumcision						
1. Girl Circumcision						
2. Boy Circumcision						
E. Other specify						
1.						
2.						
3.						

29. Who assist you in the domestic household activities

Task /Role	Hours/ day	Amount of payment (Cash / Kind)	Time Series				Change in the Role		If yes when	Who initiate or takes the decision	
			Daily	Full time	Part time	Casual	Yes	No		F	M
A. Husband:											
1.											
2.											
3.											
4.											
B. Wife											
1.											
2.											
3.											
C. Male child											
1.											
2.											
3.											
D. Female child											
1.											
2.											
3.											
4.											
Mother in - law											
1.											
2.											
3.											
4.											
Father in -law											
1											
2											
3											
4											
Other (specify)											
1.											
2.											
3.											
4.											

0. How many workers have been assisting in running your business

Labour force			
without payment	Payment		
	Cash	Kind	Free
Self			
Husband			
Family Members			
Neighbours			
Relatives			
Other specify			

. What kinds of Physical Assets are Available for the Household

Kind of Physical Assets	Access			Ownership			Decision Making		
	M	F	Joined (Specify)	M	F	Joined (Specify)	M	F	Joined (Specify)
a. Land (specify the size) -Owned Land - Rented Land .. - Family/relative land - Communal land									
b. Building / house - Owned house - Rented house - Family/relative house - Communal house									
c. Other specify									

Questionnaire Part 2

Performance Assessment of SWGU Implementing Microcredit Project

(Head Quarter Staff- SWGU)

Name of the Implementing Institutions:

Chief Executive

Name of Interviewee

1. What types of Microcredit Projects are SWGU promote for financing

- Restaurant
- Hair Salons
- Trading (clothing, spices,..)
- Retaining food & drink (kissra, salted fish, Tea making etc..)
- Shops
- Racksha
- Poultry farm
- Dairy farm
- Other please specify

2. What are the financial institutions support your Microcredit projects

Name of institutions	Amount of fund	Number of women

9. How many women have been trained on business management and group dynamics

State	women	Kind of training	Duration

0. State the problems you have been facing which would have affected your performance

..

. State the strategies you have been adopted to solve your performance constraints

..

Questionnaire Part

Performance Assessment of SWGU Implementing Microcredit Project

(State SWGU Local Field Staff)

Name of the state:

Name of the Office Manager

Name of the field staff officer / Interviewee

. What has been your repayment rate

a. Last year ..

b. This year .

2. How many groups have been formed this year under the SWGU Microcredit Project

Sector	No of groups	Total women

. How many of those women you have been given loans are rural poor women

. So far, how much funds have been given as loans to women

. a. Distance covered to farthest client group:

Name of the farthest are covered	Distance from the state HQ	Total clients in that area

. How much savings have you mobilized so far

Compulsory (SP)	Voluntary (SP)	Total (SP)

. Can you estimate how many have been employed as a result of loans provided by the SWGU Microcredit Project

Agriculture Sector			Commercial Sector			Service Sector			Total (A,B&C)
M	F	Total (A)	M	F	Total (B)	M	F	Total (C)	

. Has there been improvement in income level of households which received Loans

Yes

No

If yes by how much

..

If no Why

..

9. How many women have been trained in Group Dynamics and Business Management

Training	Number of women	Duration

0. What are the business / industries established or supported with funds from SWGU Microcredit Project

Business / Industries	Number
Trade - - -	
Servicing - - -	
Farming - - - - -	
Fisheries - - -	
Processing/ industry - - -	
Other (if any please specify) - -	
Total	

Questionnaire Part

Description of SWGU Microcredit Programmes

. General Information about the SWGU Microcredit Projects

1. Is SWGU can be considered as indigenous microcredit finance institution

2. When is the SWGU's as microcredit finance institution established functioning

3. Is there any plan for the project

Yes

No

4 . Long Term Plan

5. Short term Plan

6. What are the Mission or goals of the SWGU's as microcredit finance institution

Mission (Economically empower disadvantage women) Vision

7.Goals

8. Do you think that these goals and mission of the SWGU's microcredit finance have been achieved

Yes

No

If the answer is yes give details on the achievements or realization of its missions

a. In term of delivery of awareness creation

b .In term of delivery of saving mobilization

c. In terms of Credit

d. In terms of self reliance & financial sustainability

If the answer is no Why

9. When was the SWGU's microcredit project established

10. What are the objectives of the of the SWGU's microcredit project

..

11. Do you think that these goals of the SWGU's microcredit project have been achieved

Yes

No

If the answer is yes give details on the achievements

If the answer is no Why

2. SWGU's Activities

2. Saving

1. Is there any Saving Services provided by the SWGU's microcredit project

One : Individual saving

Yes No

2.If yes what are the eligible criteria for the membership SWGU's microcredit project

a. Who is eligible Individuals for the membership of SWGU's microcredit project

Female Male

a. What is the age of the eligible Individuals

3. Is there any Group Saving services provided by the SWGU's microcredit project

Two : Group Saving

Yes No

a. Who is eligible Individuals for the membership SWGU's microcredit project

Female Male

b. What is the maximum number of group saving members

..

c. Is there any registration process for the group

Yes

No

d. If yes what the process need to be followed for the group registration (registration at Local Council level)

4. What are the requirements followed by the SWGU for opening a saving account

5. What are the maximum balance of opening a saving account

a. Individual saving account :

b. Group saving account

c .Joint

6. Is there any stationary fees need to be collected

Yes

No

If the answer is yes how much

a. Individual saving account :

b. Group saving account

c. Joint

7. Is there any provision of passbook

Yes

No

8. Is there any requirements for the signatory

Yes

No

9.If the answer is yes what are these requirements

2.2 Credit

One : Criteria for Group Loan Eligibility

1. Do you have group loan

Yes No

2. If yes who is eligible Individuals for the membership SWGU's microcredit project

Female only Male only Both male & female (%)

3. If the clients are only female Why

4. What is the maximum number of group members of the SWGU's microcredit

5. Is there any requirements for the signatory

Yes No

6. If the answer is yes what are these requirements

7. What is the percentage for saving required from the group (30%)

8. What are the kinds and values of business assets required from the group

9. What the distance or location of the business operation from the SWGU branch/ centre

10. Is there any internal group saving & credit system required to be adopted by the group prior the project

Yes No

11. If the answer is yes what is it & for how long

a. Bank account

b. Post office

c. SWGU

d. Sandoq

12. Is there any income generating activities (IGA) required to be operated by the group prior the project

Yes No

13. If the answer is yes what is the kind of the required IGA & for how long

Two: Criteria for Individual Loan Eligibility

1. Who is eligible Individuals for the membership SWGU's microcredit project

Female Male

2. What are the requirements for getting the individual loan

3. Is there any requirement that the applicant must have met previous Group Loan membership

4. Is there any requirement that the individual application must have met successfully previous to the loan

5. Is there any financial requirement that the applicant must have saved with the SWGU/ bank for at least 6 months as guarantee before receiving the loan

6. Is there any requirement that the applicant must operate within a radius of 25 Km from the SWGU branch/ office

7. Is there any financial requirement that the applicant must have saved at least 30% of the loan as security

8. Is there any requirement that the project must be economically viable

9. Are the loans distributed to start up business sufficient

11. Please provide information on the following:

a. Size of the Loan	Group	Individual
----------------------------	--------------	-------------------

1 st loan (SP)		
---------------------------	--	--

2 nd loan (SP)		
---------------------------	--	--

3 rd loan (SP)		
---------------------------	--	--

4 th loan (SP)		
---------------------------	--	--

b. Repayment Frequency

c. Grace period

d. Repayment period

e. Interest rate

f. Stationary fees

g. Commitment fees