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“Global food security and food safety:
The role of universities”

Role of Ahfad University for Women in Nutrition and Food Security in Sudan

MANAL ALI¹, SALAH ABDELMAGID²

¹*Ahfad University for Women, Sudan, Nutrition,*

²*Arab Organization for Agricultural Development/ Gezira University, Food Security, Sudan*

Abstract

Approximately 2 million children suffer from acute malnutrition annually in Sudan, including over 550,000 under five affected by Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) and at real risk of dying. Ahfad University for Women Sudan (AUW) is highlighting an innovative perspective on the relationship between agriculture, nutrition, health and gender through research that strengthens the knowledge base and new partnerships that lead to real outcomes. This is an integrated approach joining both of nutrition sensitive and nutrition specific factors. One of the missions of AUW is to support women's empowerment and their agricultural productivity. AUW addresses gender, food security and nutrition through a variety of approaches implemented by multidisciplinary teams from its different schools. AUW is maintained exclusively for women. Emphasis is placed on preparing women to act as agents of change in building a modern nation in Sudan, or in their home countries. Areas of emphasis include food security and nutrition, education, child development, management, agricultural and domestic technologies, and health care. The University is continuing its longstanding commitment to help improve conditions in rural areas of Sudan. The University has established the Nutrition and Health Centre for Training Research in response to growing needs to address Health, food Security and Nutrition. The centre supports MSc. and Diploma degrees in Food, Nutrition and Diabetes. The Centre has, long experience in addressing the issue of food security in Sudan. This includes the development of women's skills, and other interventions in form of pilot and development projects, education tours and research studies. Its interventions focus on empowering women for food security. The centre has in collaboration with other schools strong links with rural and urban communities, in particular with female farmers, for whom it provides its interventions to improve the farming systems for enhanced food security. This includes provision of production inputs, technology transfer, and raising awareness on nutrition knowledge and practices. The centre offers nutritional advice through home economics programs targeting enhancement of rural life quality. This paper presents briefly indicators of food security and nutrition in Sudan, illustrates examples of the university's interventions in addressing food security and nutrition problems and their impacts on beneficiaries.

Keywords: Food security, gender, household, nutrition, rural