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Human Rights, Forced
Marriage

The value of a woman should not be represented solely by her natural condition of being a woman, by her reproductive value, nurturing or as a housewife. The value that a woman has

in her country must depend on her ability to contribute to national development, her decision-

making power, her ideals, her desire for well-being. Economically independent women have

the power to decide what to do with their life, when to have children, what career they want to study, what they can do to have a better economic income, they are not overshadowed by a social hierarchy in which they are in disadvantage, seek and support for collective well-

being, participate or are the protagonists of decisions that concern them, decisions that affect both their personal and professional development.

An independent woman does not need someone else to tell her what to do, when to go to school, who to marry, whom to love, when to talk; An independent woman does not need the approval of anyone to be able to act, that is why throughout our history, women have been related as the protagonists of different social movements or protests with the aim of being heard, respected and considered when making decisions involving the well- being of

both a man and a woman. Limiting one person does not generate progress, progress that all countries need. Being aware of the importance of women for public, institutional and business life is undoubtedly the key to economic and social progress for all countries in the world, including South Sudan.

Among the 100 solutions to reverse global warming of Chad Frischman, two solutions that depend mainly on women are mentioned: educating women and girls and family planning. Both solutions are based on human rights and they can reduce the world population estimated for 2050, which leads to a lower demand for resources such as electricity, food, buildings; both solutions are intertwined and if they come together, it is considered the number one solution to reverse global warming which would reduce almost 120 billion tons of greenhouse gases. (Frischman, 2018).

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Forced marriage rates rise due to food crisis ravaged by war and famine, most families are forced to put their daughters up for sale which means one less mouth to feed and a dowry that can increase their medium-term survival.

There is also another reason that is a cause of forced marriage: *ukuthwala* is an old age tradition which is practiced by some communities in a manner violating the rights of children

in South Africa; and although it originated in one ethnic group “Xhosas”, it later expanded to

different ethnic groups. (Kopanong, 2011) (see figure, 1).

South Sudan was part of Egypt under the Muhammad Ali Dynasty, and then later governed

as an Anglo-Egyptian condominium. The Republic of South Sudan became an independent

state on July 9, 2011. (World Bank, 2010).

is divided into 13 states which are further divided into 86 counties and several Payams. It has a land area of 644 330 km². The country’s economy is based on the oil sector, which accounts for about 60% of total GDP, agriculture sector and government services each accounting for about 15% of GDP. Industry and other services play a minor role, accounting

for the remaining 10% of GDP. (AFDB, 2010).

A population estimated about 11 193,725 million in 2020 were 24.6% is urban and 75.4% rural. 49.6% are women and 50.4% men. The population density in South Sudan is 18 per km². There is no official religion, but the main religions they practice are: Christianity 60.5%,

Muslim 6.2% and animistic religions where each ethnic group has its own indigenous religion

32.9% (Global Religious Landscape, 2010)

South Sudan has a tropical savanna climate. The temperatures are rising to a maximum of 38 to 40 °C. The rainy season starts in spring where maximum and minimum temperatures

drops. (World Weather & Climate Information, 2020).

The country is considered to have vast agricultural potential, but the current lack of basic infrastructure is one of the most serious obstacles that stand in the path to achieve accelerated economic growth, each ethnic group apply its own laws relating to land and land rights within its own geographical setting

Western Equatoria is one of the ten states that make up South Sudan. That has a surface area of 79.319 km². It has a population of 619 029 in 2010, 48.56% are women while 51.44% are men. 84% of the population lives in rural zones (National Bureau of Statistics, 2011). Climate & Weather Averages all year: High Temp: 31 °C, Low Temp: 17 °C. The economy of this state is based in agriculture (AFDB, 2010) (see figure. 2)

figure. 2 Households Depending Primarily on Agriculture and Livestock. (1 July, 2020). Retrieved from https://www.afdb.org/sites/default/files/documents/projects-and-operations/south_sudan_infrastructure_action_plan_-_a_program_for_sustained_strong_economic_growth_-_full_report.pdf

Only 4.3% of the land area is cultivated for production of food and agricultural raw materials.

Much of this area is cultivated periodically rather than continuously, the livelihood profile

prepared by SSCSE in 2006 states that Southern Sudan's traditional livelihood systems are a combination of cattle rearing, crop production, fishing, wild food collection, hunting and

trade; The main crops cultivated are root crops (cassava, sweet potatoes), maize, millet, groundnuts and finger millet. (AFDB, 2010)

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Before violence broke out in 2013, 52% of girls were estimated to be married before they turned 18, South Sudan has one of the highest rates of adolescent pregnancy in the world, 789 deaths per 100 000 live births means South Sudan has one of the world's worst maternal mortality rates. (Lee-Koo, 2018).

Forced marriages. Around forty-five percent of girls in South Sudan are married before the age of 18, considered as one of the countries with the highest prevalence of child marriage.

(UNICEF, 2019). They are exposed to a huge risk for early pregnancies and childbirth since

their bodies are not yet developed and physiologically, they are not prepared; problems accentuated by South Sudan's limited prenatal and postnatal healthcare services.

Normally the woman's family chooses the best candidate for her daughter and then, which depends on the dowry that can include cattle, money and other gifts; most of the time this happens without the consent of the girls which in turn makes divorce and separation more complicated, divorce is not widely accepted in South Sudan and is only carried out if the girl's family returns the dowry to the husband.

When girls are forced to marry, they are also forced to leave school, considering that the

percentage of girls and boys who attend it, is very low. South Sudan has the world's highest proportion of out-of-school children, with 72% of primary-school children out of school, according to UNICEF (April 2017). At least 2.2 million children do not go to school in South Sudan, according to UNESCO (May 2018). At least one in three schools has been damaged, destroyed, occupied or closed, UNICEF (January 2018). Of 49.6% women living in Juba, only 6.2% have attended school where most cases only they finish primary school. There is also a high percentage of illiteracy in the country, occupying 73% of the current population.

Women have very few rights in marriage, which is governed by the customary laws of ethnic groups in the absence of statutory family legislation governing marriage, separation, divorce, and other aspects of family life. In "The Interim Constitution Of Southern Sudan, 2005" part two: Bill of rights, number 19, Right to found a family states the following "Every person of marriageable age shall have the right to marry a person of the opposite sex and to found a family according to their respective family laws, and no marriage shall be entered into without the free and full consent of the man and woman intending to marry." Even part two, number 20, rights of women, subsection (1) states "Women shall be accorded full and equal dignity of the person with men." Part two, number 21, rights of the child,

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subsection (d) "not to be subjected to exploitative practices or abuse, nor to be required to serve in the army nor permitted to perform work which may be hazardous or harmful to his or her education, health or well-being; " South Sudan's constitution also states in part two, fair trail number 33, subsection (1) "Education is a right for every citizen and all levels of government in Southern Sudan shall provide access to education without discrimination as

to religion, race, ethnicity, HIV status, gender or disability. "

It is evident that in its constitution there are laws that impose equality between men and women, as well as the right to marry when they want and with whom they want both sexes, and the right that children have to receive an education, however these are the same rights that are violated with forced marriages and with children who do not attend school to work are used to combat famine for them and their families.

The famine the country is currently facing is one of the main reasons why children are deprived of education and why forced marriage exists. The status of nutrition throughout Southern Sudan has been severely impacted by decades of conflict. The quality of the diet in Southern Sudan is generally poor. Most of the population rely on sorghum or maize and either cow or goat milk. These staple foods are usually consumed throughout the year, with seasonal disparities.

To a lesser extent, the following foods are also eaten depending upon ecological zone and seasonal availability: fish, meat (cow, sheep and goat), pumpkin, sesame (or simsim), okra, and wild foods such as fruits, leaves and roots. According to the 2009 National Baseline Household Survey (NBHS) more than 75% of rural households consume cereals. The availability of the non-staple foods varies greatly throughout Southern Sudan, but most diets are not sufficiently diversified. (Harvey, 2007).

In Southern Sudan, there is generally low awareness of health-related issues, due to various reasons including the lack of, or very low levels, of education. A large portion of the underlying causes of malnutrition are related to inadequate feeding and childcare practices including discarding colostrum, pre-lacteal feeds, lack of exclusive breastfeeding, inappropriate introduction of complementary feeding, and distribution of food within the household contribute substantially to the high prevalence of malnutrition. (Harvey, 2007).

This practice limits the social, educational, health, and economic progress of women and girls in a developing country. Systemic problems in the justice system, such as a lack of infrastructure, resources and well-trained personnel, exacerbate the inability of women and

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girls to obtain justice for gender-based crimes, including child and forced marriages, or to seek redress against who has forced them to marry without their consent; even to go back to school or to be able to attend it from the beginning.

Agriculture is, for the most part, based on small, hand-cultivated units often farmed by women-headed households. Despite land availability for farming, manual land preparation limits the area households can cultivate. Academic training in South Sudan is one of its main

problems and a solution to accelerate or stop the economic, social and health development

of the country, including its severe state of famine in which it finds itself.

According to the World Bank, the actual area cultivated in any one year in South Sudan has

ranged from a minimum of 1% to a maximum of 2% of the total land area that is, from 0.65 million to 1.3 million hectares.

Much of the rural sector activity is currently focused on low-input low-output subsistence agriculture instead of production for markets. Among the significant reasons for this is: (i) the need for improved agricultural inputs and techniques such as seeds and fertilizers, storage facilities and advisory services, and irrigation development.

My proposal is based on and includes the collaboration of the Farmer Field School

(FFS). It is an FAO program that is based on learning activities through direct experience along with scientific knowledge in local systems that enable the empowerment of people and communities. The study plan is specific and depends on the area to which it is integrated.

Figure 3. Planning guide for quality programs. (July 1, 2020) Retrieved from <http://www.fao.org/3/a-i5296e.pdf>.

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The organization has the Department of Program Support and Technical Cooperation (PS) where the management team of the evaluation processes and authorization of projects of more than USD 500 000, performs the quality assurance exam that the team of Management approved the projects and designate those responsible for their budgets, and manage the closure of projects. It has a planning guide for quality programs. (FAO, 2017) (see figure. 3)

In Mexico there is a scheme of agricultural production "urban gardens" (see

projects in marginalized

figure.

4) which are used as
“outdoor spaces where all
kinds of vegetables and
seeds are grown
continuously throughout
the
year for their own
consumption or for the
development of productive

figure 4. Urban gardens. (July 1, 2020) Retracted from
<https://bonuscursos.com/producto/curso-online-de-huerto-urbano-ecologico/>

communities” (Fideicomiso

de Riesgo Compartido, 2017). Which generate a great benefit of self-sufficiency in the basic

food basket of the Mexican population, which in turn has economic and nutritional benefits.

in the state of Western Equatoria, South Sudan. The proposal is to select 20 women from the state to be able to train them in the production of crops. Each urban garden is priced around USD 7 to 13 which is roughly equivalent to 1 000 to 1 700 Sudanese pounds. The sweet potato can be grown by the tuber itself (see figure. 5), three potatoes will be planted per urban garden and in approximately 65 to 100 days it will be cultivated. Potatoes can be obtained in South Sudan, so the biggest expense will be the flights of the people who will train the new farmers; A flight from Houston, TX to Juba is worth approximately USD 1 093.

It is contemplated that only two people integrated into FFS will be needed. Financing this project will have an initial investment of approximately USD 2 326; (Skyscanner, 2020) later

when the first harvest occurs, in case of having favorable results, 40 new women will be integrated where each woman who was part of the first project, will donate 2 of their tubers to the new farmers and so on, each time the harvest ends and returns to start.

The goal is that with the help of urban gardens, women in South Sudan are able to generate their own economic income for themselves and their families on a regular basis and thus be able to train economically independent women capable of contributing economic

income, so they will not depend entirely on a man, as I said at the beginning, independent women have the opportunity to express their opinions and manage their money without having to have “the permission” of the person who maintains them, because in this case, they will be responsible for their maintenance.

FAO began developing FFS in South Sudan in 2006. Currently, through the SDC-funded project, FAO supports 25 FFS in Northern Bahr el Ghazal and 10 in Warrap State, with thousands of students.

My commitment is to send a letter to FAO describing the origin of the problem and my solution strategy, in order to incorporate it into the already existing program of the FAO FFS organization.

Figure 5. Urban garden with sweet potato. (July 1, 2020) Retracted from <https://plantatuhuerto.com/papas-cuanto-tiempo-demora-para-crecer/>

BRAC is an organization that currently governs more than 400 schools in different states of

South Sudan founded by DFID

As the constitution states that children must go to school and people can choose when and

with whom to marry, the government must guarantee that these rights are fulfilled.

Considering the organizations that already exist in South Sudan, my solution is to include in

the school curriculum that BRAC has founded the FFS program at the student level without leaving aside the one that already exists for adults.

A low investment with a productivity of self-consumption but with the possibility of serving a local market, and with the help of FFS the financial-technical relationship could be generated

to mainly create the inclusion of women, empowering their leadership training economically independent women for the contribution to their family and in turn contribute to the economic

development of the country. As I said at the beginning, independent women can express their opinions and manage their money without having to have "the permission" of the person

who maintains them, because in this case, they will be responsible for their maintenance.

And so, Sudanese families will not have to make the decision to force their daughters to marry and leave school since they will have a fixed food income which will keep women and

men in good psychological and physical health.

What would decrease the percentage of illiteracy, the children could go to school. So that power becomes more "sustainable" it will also reduce the famine and increase the economic

income of the country with the urban gardens.

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In order to carry out economic, social and academic growth, it is necessary to invest in its infrastructure to develop organizations and aid groups that contribute to the development of

South Sudan.

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