

Executive Summary:

1. This report from the Comprehensive Nongovernmental Center for Empowerment of Women and the Family reviews the social and economic participation and employment and Entrepreneurship for women in Iran. Based on its researches, our Association concluded that although the Islamic Republic of Iran in the past years, 2010 onwards in particular, made full efforts towards women's employment, nevertheless the subject of women's economic and social participation is a debatable subject which requires further study.

2. This report deals with the participation of NGOs in the eradication of the poverty and unemployment problems, and scientific and educational promotion and economic and social empowerment of women. In the end of this report some recommendations for Iran's move in the direction of eradication of poverty and also providing answers to the recommendations in the first round of the UPR on the country has been given.

3. Some of the recommendations are as follows:

- Raising awareness and knowledge of state bodies (legislative, executive and judicial) towards the empowerment of women
- Interaction and the use of the experiences of international organizations and nongovernmental organizations of other countries.
- Training government workers and also public opinion for better understanding of women's economic and social participation.

Keywords: Women's rights; poverty; education; employment; economy; assembly, participation

About us:

4. Comprehensive Nongovernmental Centre for Empowerment of Women and the Family is a nongovernmental nonprofit organization which started its activities in 2012 with the aim of work from home and reduction in the number of unemployed in Iran. The main objective of this center is the economic empowerment of women for their effective presence in economic levels and efforts to have sustainable employment. Also economic assistance to the family and expanding social justice through holding various education courses for NGOs, experts and Entrepreneurship centers and women are other main goals of the center.

5. Some of the activities of the Comprehensive Centre for the Empowerment of Women and Family is: holding of skill workshops to empower women heads of household, and educated girls skilled in farming, dairy farming, fish farming, beekeeping, and handicrafts such as rug weaving and other professions to do with sewing dresses work

from home, holding of provincial and national sittings and also holding exhibitions, jumble sales and women's handicrafts festivals.

Pivotal Recommendations:

6. This report is prepared on the basis of the below recommendations which were made in Iran's first round of the UPR in 2010:

7. Increase measures related to the promotion of women's participation in various social and economic spheres (Bangladesh)

8. Continuation of efforts to raise living standards through furthering people's access to economic, social and cultural rights, and expansion of the coverage of social services particularly in the rural regions (Kuwait)

10. Strengthening national mechanisms for fighting poverty among vulnerable social groups. (Kyrgyzstan)

The situation of recommendations in the past, present and satisfactory future:

11. In 2010, the Islamic Parliament approved the executive guidelines to the Organization and Support for Domestic Professions Act with the aim of identifying and expanding work from home capacities to promote job opportunities.

12. A look at women before the revolution in Iran shows that the basis for the social and economic growth and development of women and girls was not available on a large scale.

13. Although the Islamic Republic of Iran following the revolution has paid particular attention towards women's economic and social participation, nevertheless issues such as the ups and downs of development, poverty and unemployment, population growth and America's sanctions imposed on Iran over the last three decades, and their escalation in the last 6 years, have all put obstacles in the way of the promotion of women's participation. In view of factors such as population growth and increasing of the sanctions, poverty and unemployment, would all be good from the Comprehensive Nongovernmental Centre for Empowerment of Women and the Family viewpoint that until the end of the Fifth Development Plan, the unemployment problem (particularly in the case of women heads of household), economic participation, employment and Entrepreneurship of women and girls go under the control and careful supervision of governmental and nongovernmental bodies.

Methodology (Data Collection Method):

14. For this report, this Centre has used various methods: political and legislative studies (assessment of domestic and international policies and laws, particularly relating to the law on the right to use women in scientific, educational, economic and social arenas), review of the research findings (library, articles, media, thematic and field studies).

Advancements:

15. In the survey study regarding the social and economic participation of women after the Islamic revolution and particularly over the last four years indicates the improvement of women and family conditions. In the past four years the subject of the promotion of women's economic and social participation has seen improvements in the four following areas:

- Legislative area:

16. In 2010 the Iranian Islamic parliament ratified the Fifth Economic, Social and Cultural Development Plan of the Islamic Republic of Iran Act on the basis of which better conditions have come about for women. This Act stresses on the individual growth and empowerment and promotion of the status of women in the economic, social and employment arenas

17. In 2010 the Iranian Islamic parliament ratified the executive guidelines to the Organization and Support for Work from Home Act with the aim of recognition and development of working from home capacities for the development of employment opportunities.

18. In 2010 the Centre for Women and Family Affairs took steps to ratify the Women and Family Affairs Guideline Document. In this document mechanisms have been introduced for support for women's presence in various economic and Entrepreneurship, social and cultural arenas. Some of these mechanisms include: the proposal of the launching and empowering of funds and credit cooperatives and job creation for women, support for the opening of a center for the growth of technological units for women, launching of self-employed mini markets on arts, research, inventions and equipment build for female students and post graduates help to form and expand women's NGOs in all scientific, economic and cultural areas

19. In 2010 the Centre for Women and Family Affairs took steps to ratify the Women and Family Affairs Guideline Document. One of the mechanisms of this document includes: empowerment and development of women's skills for effective presence in employment and economic arenas, such as support for the holding education programs, skills training and promotion of women's professional skills in proportion to society's needs with an emphasis on women heads of household and drafting of a comprehensive

plan for the empowerment of self-supporting and women heads of household with the cooperation of other relevant organizations and NGOs.

20. In 2011 the "Founding of Advisory, Information Dissemination and Job Creation Services Centers in the Provinces with the Economy Growth of the Country" was ratified.

21. In 2011, the Ministry of Cooperative, Employment and Social Welfare, with the cooperation of the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology ratified the Operational Programs in the Field of Work and Empowerment and Skill Learning Plan for the purpose of the expansion and promotion of job creation culture in the country. Towards the organization of this plan other volunteer bodies were obligated to design operational programs in this regard and implement them.

- *Executive area:*

22. The study of statistics shows that over the three decades following the revolution, serious attention has been paid towards the economic participation of women. In 2010, Ministry of Cooperative with the cooperation of the Centre for Women and Family Affairs, for the purpose of making women's employment and eradication of poverty operational, took steps in the founding of the Cooperative and Expansion of Women's Entrepreneurship Foundation. This Foundation through concentrating on the cooperative sector tries to takes steps towards the job creation and employment of women and the family.

23. In 2010 the Ministry of Agriculture Jihad held workshop on Waste Management and preparation of Vermicomposting and Entrepreneurship for 1204 rural and nomadic tribe women in 20 provinces of Iran in order to increase women's capabilities in economy and Healthcare.

24. In 2009-2011 for the purpose of the empowerment and promotion of the capacities of women and family NGOs, the Centre for Women and Family Affairs held Entrepreneurship and skills training workshops in 30 provinces in setting up sewing workshop, needlework, handicrafts, mushroom farming and cattle farming.

25. In 2011 the Technical and Professional Organization held an Entrepreneurship education workshop for 100 engineers and directors of the Knowledge-Based Firms, post graduates and university students, and held courses for work from home for 543 women heads of household and women with bad heads of household in 8 provinces.

26. In 2011 the Entrepreneurship Foundation held a workshop on development, investment and employment for 1635 women heads of household and post graduates.

27. In 2012 the Centre for Women and Family Affairs of the Office of the Presidency with the cooperation of the Women and Family Cultural-Social Cooperation Council for the purpose of the promotion of women and family conditions, introduced participation methods for women in the realization of the national production and support for Work and Iranian Investment program.

28. In 2012, for the purpose of the promotion and participation of women in the economy and employment fields, the Centre for Women and Family Affairs of the Office of the Presidency held 5 one day education workshops on the subject of "introduction to the basic concepts of Entrepreneurship and creativity for active NGOs in the fields of women and family " for 150 executive directors of NGOs in the Bushehr, Semnan, Ghazvin, Alburz and Gilan provinces.

29. The implementation of the Empowerment of Gilan Women in managing Domestic Waste project in 2012 with the aim of the participation of women in a public programme for cleaning the environment, with particular attention to the subject of the environment and consumption management.

30. Following the presentation of the employment program report of the Mines and Industry Ministry in 2013, it was decided that from a total of 450 billion Rials bank resources, 105 billion Rials to be allocated for job creating projects of this ministry; Considering that the considerable sum of 450 billion Rials facilities in 2013, based on the maximum capacity in payment of facilities through internal bank resources for job creation projects, the priority is given to half completed projects which will become operational by the end of the current Iranian year.

31. In 2013, a budget of 9000 billion Rials was allocated by the Mehr Imam Reza Fund for work from home?, self-employment and Entrepreneurship projects for women heads of household. Throughout its activities to-date this fund has managed with the payment of 36000 Rials facilities to create job opportunities for 670 thousand women entrepreneurs and heads of household.

32. Although over the last three decades following the revolution in Iran efforts have been made to promote the economic and social participation of women and the family, but we hope that these moves continue for their improvements.

NGOs area:

33. Over the last few years, with the multiplication of NGOs involved in women's issues and their concentration on economic participation, relatively a more suitable atmosphere

than the past in people and society's understanding of the economic and social participation of women, elimination of discrimination and inequality and eradication of poverty and unemployment has been formed. Also the participation of charitable individuals in the said time period has increased.

Challenges and problems:

34. In view of the aforementioned advancements and the promotion of the general atmosphere, there are still challenges and problems in this regard which are:

35. In view of the country's economic problems there are still a notable number of women who do not have suitable jobs to provide for their living.

36. At the end of the horizon perspective, Iran shall have a population of 90 million. The current unemployment rate is at 16% and the employment trend that has existed to-date in the country, and if this trend continues, considering the huge number of the unemployed who, unwillingly are consumers while not taking part in production the realization of the economic objectives of the perspective seem very difficult.

37. The imposition of sanctions has created many problems for the employment of women and the financial abilities of families, particularly families with low incomes; which for sure are contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Recommendations:

38. The Comprehensive Centre for the Empowerment of Women and Family for the removal of the stated problems, also for the further effective actions of Iran towards the recommendations accepted from the first round of the UPR (mentioned earlier in this report), presents the following recommendations:

- Education for women and girls to empower them in the social, political and economic arenas.
- The government's planning and management for the elimination of discrimination in the employment market, access to financial resources, provision of financial security and preparation of a basis for the social dynamicity of women.
- Effective action for the elimination of traditional beliefs, elimination of violence against women and reduction of gender discrimination.
- Participation of women in overall political and economic decision makings of the country, guaranteeing equality in accessing of resources and fair distribution of profits and balance of power between men and women
- \- Coordination between the activities of NGOS and relevant GOs.
- Preparation of the basis for the optimum use of domestic NGOs from international organizations and NGOs experiences in the field of work from other parts of the world.