

# **Empowering the family supervising women**

**Sedighin Charity Institute**

**Mehrshad Shababi**

## **Report of Sedighin Charity Institute on empowering the family supervising women**

### **Summary:**

- 1- This report regards some concerns which Sedighin Charity Institute mentions about problems of the supervising women in different societies and Iran as well as presentation of some solutions for solving the problems of this group of women and their families.
- 2- Study on changes of family in different regions of the world indicates increase of the number of families supervised by the women relative to total population in the last thirty years.
- 3- Of the fundamental reasons for this increase are divorce, increasing life expectancy of the women relative to men, and finally their widowhood, population and social factors, immigration resulting from economic-environmental and political factors and change of cultural patterns. (UNICEF, 1993, 1993-1994).

This institute believes that the most fundamental solution for this problem is to empower this group.

- 4- This report gives necessary suggestions for these problems while considering increasing statistics and incoming problems in universal and national scale.

### **Introduction of the organization**

- 5- Sedighin Charity Institute started its activity in Dec. 2001 by aiming at empowering the supervising women under registration No. 43/76993 by Ministry of the Interior. Subject of this institute is to empower supervising women and their families and all activities of this institute is nonpolitical and non profit in accordance with Article 2 of Articles of Association. Of goals of this institute are to support and empower the target groups by giving financial and non- financial aids and legal, family, economic and employment consultations as well as to create job opportunities for this group of women and their children and to fulfill mental, psychological and cultural needs of their children through cultural-recreational activities and to promote cultural and educational levels of the

women in order to prevent from social damages of these groups and those supervised by them.

- 6- Of activities of this institute are to establish Pazhoohesh Gostar Service Company under registration No. 188817 and to establish Soorchin semi industrial kitchen as well as to create and equip dressmaking workshop under trade name of Piratan and to train the assistance seekers with use of professors of Alzahra University which was confirmed by Islamic Development Bank (IDB) granting \$19000 to the institute. These actions led to employment of many assistance seekers covered by the institute.

Design of ATEK (Education, experience, work) empowering model which is herewith attached and implementation of the related model and creation of educational workshops: dressmaking, computer, repair of mobile, photography, cinematography and assembly are of other activities of this institute. It is necessary to note that more than 400 assistance seekers have been trained in ATEK design and more than half of them were empowered.

### **History**

- 7- Since the countries have different definitions of the supervising women, therefore, the presented statistics is based on the same definition. In accordance with prevailing estimates, one third of the families in the world are supervised by the women and this statistics is increasing. In urban regions of Latin America and some parts of Africa, this figure reaches 50%.

With regard to the statistics registered by the official sources , 15-20% of the family in Europe and America, 30% in Africa and South Asia , 22% in Yemen, and 6% in Sudan are supervised by the women(Alhadad, 2003,9). 20% of the family in Egypt(Albayan, 200, 2003), 40% in Jamaica , 33% in Peru , 25% in Dominican Republic and about 60% of the family in Negro are supervised by the women (Mohammadi, 93, 2006).

- 8- Case study of this report is about Iran, however, the presented solutions with partial difference commensurate with customs and traditions of the regions can be attributed to other regions.

### **Status of the supervising women in Iran**

- 9- Principles of constitutional law and civil laws in Iran have referred to special support of the women and procurement of their salary. By virtue of the fourth plan of development, the government is obliged to take action regarding preparation of master plan for empowering the women supervising their family. This plan can be implemented on the basis of cooperation of the organizations, foundations, and nongovernmental associations. In recent years, number of the families which are managed by women and live under poverty line is increasing due to traditional and legal limitations and social and economic problems.
- 10- On the basis of census of 2006, more than 1,641,000 families supervised by the women have been identified. On the other hand, one family out of 11 families is managed by women. Increase of these families is considerable in recent years due to increase of other social phenomena such as divorce and addiction and unemployment of husband. on the basis of statistics in 1976, 1986, 1996, families managed by women have comprised of 7.1, 7.3 and 8.4% of the total Iranian families respectively.
- 11- On the basis of results of this census, out of 1,641,000 women supervising the family in the country, more than 1,410,000 ones i.e. about 86% have been unemployed and only 14% has been employed.

More than 50% of the families managed by women are in the first and second deciles i.e. the poorest groups.

71% of the women supervising their families have low education or are illiterate and poverty and illiteracy have direct and indirect effect on physical and mental health and cultural and social status of these women and their families. The number of the illiterate persons in families managed by women is 2.1 times more than the number of illiterate persons in families managed by men. The number of the employed persons in families managed by women is less than half of the number of illiterate persons in families managed by men. In 63% of the families managed by women versus 13% of the families managed by the men, there is no employed person. Unfortunately, many women supervising the family are in poor, low income group and those lacking necessary skills for employment and there are

other barriers to their growth and development in addition to poverty and illiteracy among which we can name the following:

Lack of self confidence and lack of enough skill for life management

Limitation of social and economic relations

Cultural problems of remarriage

Attitude of the society to this class and increased possibility of profiteering in individual and social relations

Inequality of social opportunities

Worry, anxiety and insecurity toward the future

12- The problem is so large that no development solution is found for solving it in national view and major planning. But this way is not flat and has some challenges such as:

13- Defective cycle of increasing growth of the women supervising their families due to cultural and social problems and stability and continuation of cultural and social problems because origin of the damages such as problems of women supervising the family is not removed.

### **13-factors effective on problems**

A- Lack of dynamic laws and ambiguity in some laws, lack of unity in judicial procedure in issues of women's right and laws sanctions

B- Lack of efficient information system in order to identify status quo and exploit data and information in formulation of the strategies

C- Abundance of decision making centers, parallel activities and waste of resources

D- Incomprehensive plan of empowering and reliance on its limited parts

E- General economic problems such as employment status in the country

F- Lack of correct working culture in the entire society and consequently in women supervising their families and their children

G- Lack of house jobs scope suitable for the women and release of the women in the fields of economic challenges of the society without any solution

14- In this regard, the institute has taken action regarding implementation of a plan (attachment 2). Plan execution method is of field type and its statistical population includes all women supervising their families covered by the institute and their families. Information gathering is of library type and study and measurement of their different needs were done through interview. After information gathering and data analysis, some strategies were extracted that were implemented on the pilot basis on the assistance seekers of the institute and considerable changes and effects were observed before and after plan execution such increase in self confidence, increase of satisfaction with life, increase of working efficiency, high interest in teamwork, courage to express idea and make comment which led to emergence of the talent and creativity in some assistance seekers. Acceptance of these persons increased in their family as well. The following suggestions are results of the finding and limited implementation of this plan:

Suggestions and recommendations:

14- Sedighin Charity Institute suggests some plans and methods for removing deprivation from this class all of which are summarized in empowering process. Empowerment is a complex process of changes of mental, psychobiological, spiritual, social and cultural factors and indices. Failure to promote each one of these sections can damage empowerment process; as a result, it is necessary to take action regarding realization of the following goals in accordance with empowerment master plan.

**Goals of the plan:**

16- As referred above, empowerment is a complex process of positive and continual changes in mental, psychobiological, spiritual, social and cultural factors and indices. Goals of the empowerment master plan are as follows:

**17- A- mental empowerment of the assistance seekers :**

- Study on mental health condition of assistance seekers and intervention for problem solving (removal of the tensions and problems which are serious obstacles to empowerment).
- Preparation of the assistance seekers for conscious entrance and active participation in empowerment process

- Increase of compatibility skills in assistance seekers
- Promoting management power in themselves and families
- (All of these cases are performed through individual and group consultations and formation of teamwork with use of experienced professors in the field of consultation and psychology)

**17-B- social and cultural empowerment of the assistance seekers:**

- promoting level of knowledge, technical and vocational skills and life skills in assistance seeker (by creation of necessary facilities for the assistance seekers in order to continue studies and necessary coordination so that her education and training don't damage her work and care of the children)
- Promoting social identity and active participation of the assistance seeker in social activities (by providing the opportunities for the assistance seeker to have social participation in addition to work).
- Promoting suitable relation level in the family (by providing the opportunity for the these persons to use pilgrimage and tourism trips with their families as well as holding classes for increasing skill of relationship with family member)
- Promoting social interactions in accordance with social customs

**17-C-biological empowerment:**

- helping treat the diseases and train how to prevent from diseases (by covering them under therapeutic services insurance as well as identifying charitable physicians and introducing them to the assistance seekers in need and giving necessary information regarding prevention from diseases).
- Empowering the assistance seeker regarding health with emphasis on suitable and varied nutrition
- Training and building culture of sport

**17-D-spiritual empowerment:**

- reinforcing spiritual morale and feeling of confidence in the assistance seeker
- reinforcing religious morale through thinking and religion

### **17-E- economic empowerment:**

- helping the assistance seekers promote on the educational or technical and vocational basis in accordance with needs of the labor market
- making effort to employ the assistance seekers and promote their job skill , satisfaction and security
- providing necessary services for economic empowerment with emphasis on assistance seeker
- making effort to make the assistance seeker independent (self employment)

It is necessary to note that this plan can be generalized in the country and be implemented in many other countries with partial differences commensurate with customs of the countries.