AHFAD UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN

INFLUENCING POLICY THROUGH RESEARCH
Pioneering in Biomedical and Multidisciplinary Researches

Ahfad University for Women (AUW), is a non-governmental, non-profit making, non-sectarian university in Omdurman, established in 1966 and has a long history of creating proficient, professional women dedicated to promoting improvements in the status and living conditions for Sudanese women and their families. Currently it has over 7,300 students from all parts of Sudan and more than 19 countries in Africa and other regions. The AUW provides a five-year bachelors degree in the Schools of Health Sciences; Psychology and Preschool Education; Rural Extension Education and Development; Management Studies, Medicine; and Pharmacy. Each of these programs combines academic course work, experiences in extension and rural leadership development, and on-the-job training in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, UN agencies, and private organizations. Research is an integral part of AUW programs and it carries out different types of researches i.e. policy oriented research, action oriented research, gender and women empowerment researches, knowledge production research and scientific researches.

Pioneering in kala-azar diagnosis at National and Regional levels exclusively through Biomedical Research:

AUW is the pioneer and only institution in the country that produced the Direct Agglutination Test for diagnosis of kala-azar, a test which is recommended by the WHO. Local production of this test was supported by the WHO and evaluated both at the national and international levels in London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Liverpool Hospital and the Royal Tropical Institute, the Netherlands. Successful attempts were made to produce a simple, economic test affordable by poor Sudanese population in rural poor settings.

To translate its commitment to Sudanese people, the Ahfad Biomedical Research Laboratory (ABRL) works in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and contribute to the national control efforts for kala-azar in endemic areas. This is done through provision of the test, technical assistance and training of laboratory technicians.

ABRL is working in collaboration with Central Hospital and receive difficult cases which are referred to these hospitals from endemic areas. This helps ABRL in identifying research problems and inform research priorities in kala-azar.

Community Oriented Researches

Most of AUW researches are geared towards community development and well being of Sudanese people; hence priorities are always influenced by community needs, set-up and priorities. The AUW provision of services, also, helps to identify research areas both for staff and students research.

AUW responds to research areas and topics identified through its community oriented programs (rural extension field trips and other outreach activities), business companies, relevant CSOs and CBOs, State Strategy for the Alleviation of Poverty (SAP), Sudan MDGs report, RH policy, Women Empowerment Policy, base line surveys and needs assessment e.g. Marawi Dam, National Statistics and Census Centre. One of the key research findings led by AUW through its Biomedical Research Laboratory resulted in developing a diagnostic test for kala-azar which is a great health challenge in Sudan.

Research and Grants Unit

To coordinate and influence research policy, the university established the Research and Grants Unit, which is specialized in Promoting and conducting research as part of the mission of the university and clearly stated in its act and constitution. The goal of the unit is to build and strengthen research capacity of AUW for both staff (offers training opportunities e.g. Transfer Of Knowledge Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN)) and students (tutors Research Method Course), also to promote the use of research results in policy making and planning.

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