

**Sudan University for Science and  
Technology  
Centre for Studies and Culture of Peace**

**Decent work for domestic workers; local  
measures for Sudan**

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**Dedication**

***To Aboi*** (may Allah rest his soul)

*Who always wanted to see this endeavor taking place;*

*Who always believed in me- more than I ever did!*

...

*To the mothers who took good care of us, while our mothers were  
busy earning us a living,*

*To the fathers who woke up to the rising sun, drove us to schools or  
took good care of our yards or guarded us over the years,*

*To the young sisters and brothers, who left their homes in good will  
for a pursuit of a better life, yet had to sacrifice young age and  
wishes while attending to our own,*

***To Altoma and Almaz;***

***To domestic workers***

...

## **Acknowledgements**

### ***“And Say: “My Lord! Increase Me In Knowledge”***

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A big bow to the Monti-Badriss and their cozy home of inspiration- my haven-where words simply flowed non-stop.

Very special thanks go to the gifted Mohamed Muhsin and Munir; who managed to keep my sanity on hold- throughout!

Lastly, I am grateful to my family and friends for bearing with my ups and downs, believing in and supporting me consistently and constantly throughout the journey.

## **Abbreviations and Glossary**

- **ILO**

International Labour Organization

- **ILO C189:**

ILO Convention 189: decent work for domestic worker

"اتفاقية منظمة العمل الدولية رقم 189: العمل اللائق لعمال المنازل"

- **1955 SDSA:**

Sudan 1955 Domestic Servants Act

**قانون السودان لخدم المنازل لسنة 1955**

- **2009 KSDSA:**

The 2009 Khartoum State Domestic Service Act

**قانون ولاية الخرطوم للخدمة المنزلية لسنة 2009**

- **Domestic Worker:**

According to the Convention 189 of the International Labour Organization (ILO), a domestic worker is "any person engaged in domestic work within an employment relationship" who may:

- Work on full-time or part-time basis,
- May be employed by a single household or by multiple households,
- May be a (live-in worker) or (live-out worker),
- May be working in a country of which he/she is not a national.

- **Decent work:**

A concept developed by the ILO to ensure the implementation of basic and fundamental human rights at work (freedoms, equality, dignity, respect and fairness) albeit formal or informal, it is implemented through country agendas.

## **Decent work for domestic workers; local measures for Sudan**

### **Abstract**

This research falls under the umbrellas of human rights and human security: decent work's constituents embrace meanings of human rights including dignity, equality and fairness. Decent work also embraces constituents of human security such as education, social security and health measures. The research narrows down to focus on the measures and implications which have to be considered to implement the concept of decent work for informal job-looking in specific at one of the most prominent which is domestic work.

The research attempted to achieve the following objectives: to disclose the historical and current contexts of domestic work in Sudan, to expose a show case of domestic work practice, relations and dynamics and finally to carry out processes of review and amendment to the Sudan's local domestic work in line with the international regulations; mainly the ILO Convention 189.

The research employed a mixed-method research approach, depending on "QUAL-quant"; where most of the methods used were qualitative including semi-structured interviews, focus groups and life histories/narratives. While a slight share of quantitative questionnaires appeared in two parts of the Delphi Technique. Thematic analysis was extensively used to present findings.

Findings of the research were of a versatile nature: domestic work context interviews demonstrated an extended notion of slavery and forced labour in major dealings and parts of the employment relationships and dynamics between domestic

workers and their employers which still witnesses a prominence of a master-service relationship rather than an employer-employee relation. Household interviews, focus group discussions and narratives revealed an absence in decent work relations expressed by both domestic workers and their employers. The showcase- exemplified by these lastly mentioned methods- also demonstrated an expression of a strong need and appeal for a regulative legislation to guarantee rights and administer obligations of both parties in a domestic work (employment relationship). The Delphi Technique brought together a panel of experts pertinent to domestic work which reviewed the Sudan domestic work acts and reached a consensus for their amendment so as to include proper and decent work conditions and measures, to be in compliance with international standards.

Recommendations of this research came in three folds: policy statement to be presented to the National Assembly and the Khartoum State Legislative Council so as to put into action the amendment of the federal and state domestic work acts. Policy recommendations were put forward to pave the way for decent domestic work; targeting policy makers in the National Assembly, Khartoum Legislative Council, Ministry of Labour, Sudan Workers Union, civil society... to develop programs for advocacy, law reform, rights promotion so as to achieve better work conditions and enjoyment of labour rights to domestic workers. Finally further study recommendations were suggested so as to fill-in the research gaps which were discovered while conducting this research.

**Key words: Sudan, domestic work, decent work, international labour standards and conventions, ILO, mixed-method research**

## العمل اللائق لعمال المنازل (المعايير المحلية للسودان)

### مستخلص البحث

يندرج هذا البحث من ناحية عامة تحت مظلتى حقوق الانسان و الأمن الإنساني، حيث أن مفهوم العمل اللائق قائم على المبادئ الأساسية لحقوق الانسان بما يشمل الكرامة و المساواة و العدالة. كما يتضمن مفهوم العمل اللائق مكونات الأمن الإنساني مثل التعليم و الحماية الاجتماعية و الرعاية الصحية. يركز البحث على المعايير المحلية و التدابير اللازمة لتطبيق مفهوم العمل اللائق على الأعمال غير الرسمية- بتركيز على عمل المنازل كونه من أهم الأعمال غير الرسمية و أكثرها انتشاراً.

هدف البحث لتحقيق المستخرجات الآتية:

- استكشاف الخلفية التاريخية و المعاصرة لعمل المنازل فى السودان،
- استعراض لتفاصيل العلاقة العمالية لعمل المنازل،
- اقتراح مراجعة و تعديل للقوانين المحلية لعمل المنازل لمواكبة الاتفاقيات الدولية-

بالأخص اتفاقية منظمة العمل الدولية رقم 189: "العمل اللائق لعمال المنازل".

استخدمت منهجية البحث ما يعرف بالمنهج الخليط (نوعي/كمي) بالتركيز على أساليب البحث النوعية متمثلة فى المقابلة و السرد و مجموعات النقاش. بينما تمثلت الأساليب البحثية الكمية فى استبيانين تابعين لمنهج ديلفى. اتبعت الدراسة اسلوب التحليل الموضوعي لاستعراض النتائج بطريقة تفصيلية.

تعددت نتائج البحث، حيث أظهرت مقابلات الخلفية عن وجود دلائل عمالة قسرية فى نواح عديدة للعلاقة العمالية بين عمال المنازل و مخدمهم و التى تستبطن إلى الآن سيادة علاقة سيد و خادم عوضاً عن علاقة مخدم و مستخدم. كما تشهد احتكار وسطاء عمال المنازل لمفاوضات شروط العمل و الأجور فى بعض الأحيان. كشفت مقابلات المنازل و السرد و مجموعات النقاش عن غياب معايير العمل اللائق فى العلاقة بين عمال المنازل و مخدمهم، كما أظهرت الفئتان احتياج كبير لتفعيل قانون منظم للعلاقة العمالية يضمن حقوق الطرفين. نجح منهج ديلفى فى جمع مجموعة خبراء مختصين لمراجعة قانوني السودان الاتحادي و الولائي -لولاية الخرطوم- لعمل المنازل و أسفر إعمال المنهج عن مقترحات و توصيات لتعديل القانونين حتى يضمننا شروط العمل اللائق و يتوافقا مع المعايير الدولية.

تأتي توصيات البحث في ثلاثة محاور، تمثل الأول في تقديم مسودة تعديل قانوني العمل المنزلي للمجلس الوطني و مجلس ولاية الخرطوم التشريعي. وفي المحور الثاني وضعت توصيات عملية لتمهيد الطريق لتوفير شروط العمل اللائق لعمال المنازل. و تستهدف هذه التوصيات صناع القرار في المجلس الوطني و مجلس ولاية الخرطوم التشريعي و وزارة العمل و اتحاد العمال و المجتمع المدني و ذلك بإطلاق حملات برامج مناصرة و إصلاح قانوني و توعية. أخيراً اقترح البحث مجموعة توصيات لدراسات مستقبلية لسد الفراغات البحثية التي أظهرها البحث.

**الكلمات الأساسية: السودان، عمل المنازل، العمل اللائق، منظمة العمل الدولية، منهج خليط (نوعي/كمي)**

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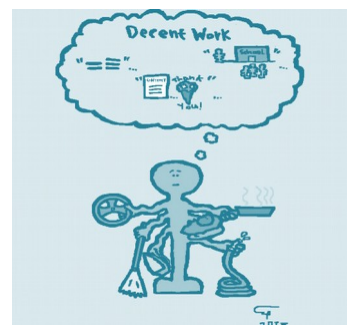
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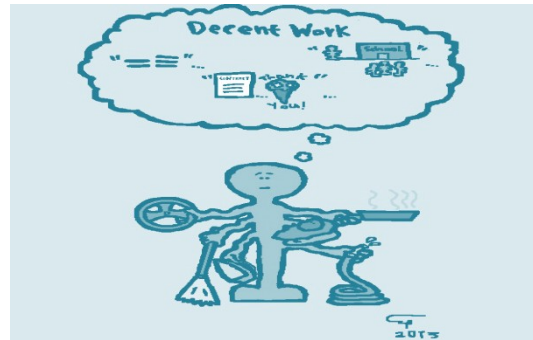
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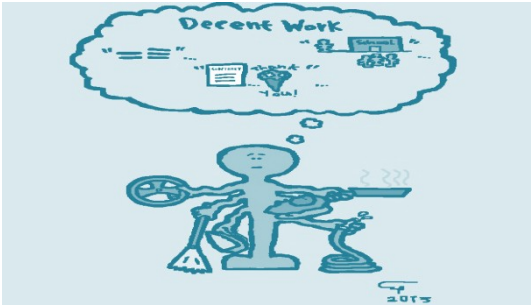
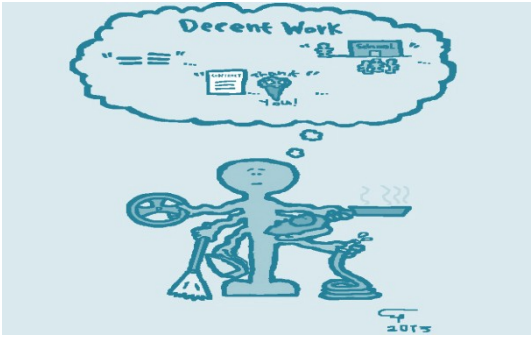
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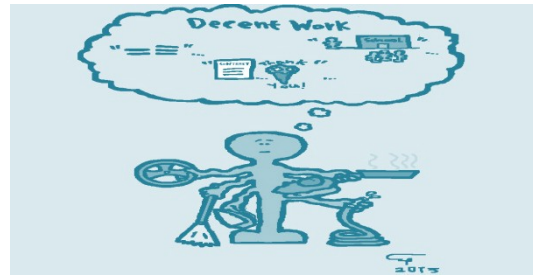
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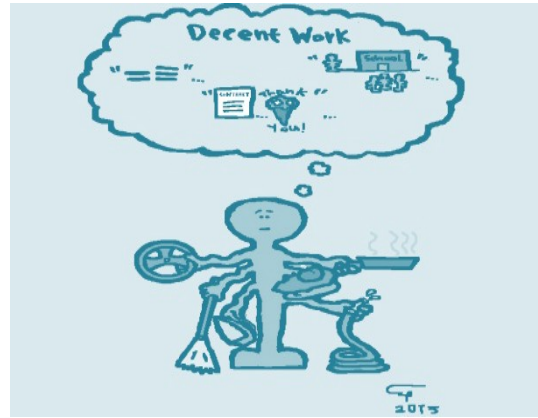
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