

Annual August Meetings as a Stimulator for Female Empowerment: Case Study Udi Local Government Area of Enugu State, Nigeria

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Abstract : Women's economic participation and empowerment are fundamental to strengthening women's rights and enabling women to have control over their lives and exert influence in the society. The economic empowerment of women is a prerequisite for sustainable development, pro-poor growth and the achievement of all the millennium development Goals (MDGs). For women to be in development they need to be empowered morally, socially, economically, and financially and this is why women in Udi Local Government Area of Nigeria meet every August, the eighth month of the year to discuss matters relating to the pursuit of women empowerment, community welfare, and national development. This exploratory study depicts how annual august meetings serve as a stimulator for female empowerment with a case study Udi Local Government area of Enugu state, Nigeria. The paper finds that 'August Meeting' is a regular annual occurrence in Udi Local Government Area, Enugu State, Nigeria particularly for married women and is designed to better the lot of women, the child, family, the church, and the Community. Through this forum, with its seminars and workshops, women have the opportunity to learn everything about womanhood and how to chart new courses of action and sources of empowerment. The gathering gives women the opportunity to be integrated into their community development projects, and having women as stakeholders and not mere observers helps guarantee a speedy and steady community and overall national development progress. Funds are raised for community development projects through annual dues, levies, donations, fines, sales, income from money-yielding ventures, endowment and investiture. Annual August meeting also known as 'Mothers Summit' is indeed a powerful stimulator for female empowerment. Support and invigoration of this women initiative is essential for sustainable emancipation of female gender, not just in Udi Local Government Area of Nigeria but globally.

Keywords : women empowerment, annual august meeting, Udi Lga, mothers' summit, stimulator, emancipation, sustainability, community welfare, national development, millennium development goal

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