

Abstract

Desertification Phenomena is one of the problems threatening lands of Yemen Republic and other Natural Resources. Such land deterioration excalarated due to the increase of pressure on limited natural resources, resulting decrease in production. Desertification appears in different forms. Recent estimation indicated that 97% of Yemen Republic is suffering from different status of Desertification, due to that Government of Republic of Yemen quickly signed and ratified the UN treaty on Desertification control with close cooperation of international community aiming to combat such negating Phenomena. This summary gives light on efforts carried out by the Republic of Yemen to implement this convention:

- 1) **Strategies and priorities established within the framework of sustainable development plans or strategies.**

Republic of Yemen set within its strategies and priorities, establishment of sustainable development projects. Some of these projects are concerned with combating Desertification. Implementation of the national plans such as five year plan for social and economic development (1996 - 2000). These include conservation of water resources, development and wise management along with other environmental subjects. Most of these plans are implemented, and the remaining activities are under implementation till present time.

Regarding the national plan for environment measures. Priorities were determind for environmental problems in Yemen. This was reflected to cure soil and natural resources deterioration, over exploitation of water table and water pollution.

Republic of Yemen Prepared a Desertification control plan. This plan was considered as the main reference in combating Desertification for all international, regional, and national organizations. Republic of Yemen implemented a number of projects related to combat Desertification in different areas of the Republic, aiming to control of soil erosion, sand dune stabilization, land classification for agriculture use, forestry development and increase of green areas. At present a number of projects are under implementation, as well as there are numbers of future projects distributed in different zones of the country. All above mentioned projects are aiming to control Desertification. One of the most important programme related to Desertification topic is poverty alleviation which aim to develop areas depending on local community strategy, in such a manner, to complete control under the hands of local communities. Since 1998 water strategy is under implementation which aim to cure acute imbalance between people and water resources.

2) Measures taken to implement the convention.

GDFDC was appointed as NCB, because it was considered as the national authority related within the implementation of different activities such as management of forestry-range resources, and Desertification control. Implementation of the convention within GDFDC are carried out by two ways which are:

One) Focal point (FP): the General Director of GDFDC was appointed as the FP to follow the development and process of implementation of the convention at national, sub-regional, regional and international levels.

b) National Network to combat Desertification: This Network includes members from different governorates of Republic of Yemen. It carries out collection and updating information of concern to Desertification control and lighting on the affected areas, which has the priority in Desertification control, contribution in evening extension gatherings linking and coordination of the affected areas. Enlarging this network to

include a number of governmental and non-governmental corporation concern with desertification control, communication and coordination between members of the authority and people concerned achieved according to running activities through direct communication or fast facilities available such as telephone or fax, communication with sub-regional regional and international organizations is achieved through fax, mobile telephone, e-mail and internet.

The authority is implementing the national work programme and similar activities in Desertification control, strengthening capacities for forest, range management, watershed, preparation of maps and supporting the contribution of non-governmental organizations particularly women association, agricultural cooperation union in Desertification control.

3) Participatory process in support of preparation and implementation of action programme.

It is not possible to create sustainable development plan without indulging contribution within development strategies or it should be recognized, that there is shortage quantities or it should be recognized, that there is shortage quantitative and qualitative information's connected to condition of natural resources in the country. On this base there is shortage in contribution and education about environmental deterioration and reflected results, ultimately there is shortage in contribution in preparation and implementation of national program of work on the contrary, awareness and contribution increased in the last period as a result of efforts applied from extension side in GDFDC such achievement aiming large sector of people, alarmness enlarged at present because the public recognized Desertification danger which comes through mass majority of Broadcasting, Education, Awkaf, Extension, Youth, Sport Sectors and Environmental Protection Council (EPC).

It is worth to mention here that Republic of Yemen received aid from the Kingdom of Holland in implementing a project in policy Gender in agriculture and Food Security on the belief that

the role of women and her contribution in protection and management of natural resources as well as desertification control.

- 4) Consultative process in support of the preparation and implementation of national action programmes and partnership agreement with developed country parties and other interested entities.**

Republic of Yemen opened the contributions to Desertification control for regional and international agencies, through their experts working in different BI-lateral or multi-lateral Desertification control projects, or research working plan, such as five year plan projects related to Desertification control, also an invitation was forwarded to developed countries to participate in national workshops concerning Desertification control, rehabilitation of deteriorated natural resources, reactivation of women role and people's contribution the main on-going activities with those agencies are:

a) Sustainable environment management programme: This program consist of seven sub-programs. It aims to build capacities for a number of government corporations, non-governmental organizations in environment management, soil deterioration and sustainable utilization of natural resources.

Two) Soil and water conservation project: Aims maintain terraces, watershed management and sand dune stabilization.

Three) Environment protection project in Tihama : Aims strengthen Government programme in improving life of rural areas.

Four) Sustainable Environmental management project: Aims to Build up administrative capacities for the national authority of water resources.

Five) Forestry development project: Aims to strengthen GDFDC in Developing plans concerning with forestry sector, extension regulations and collection of informations about natural resources and its management.

To fulfill called regional and international counterparts to participate in a number of work-shops mainly "The national Conference on Desertification Control ", "National conference to review national plan in Desertification control and two technical workshops", (First and second) for the preparation of national policy in watershed

5) Measures to be taken or planned within the framework of national action programme.

Republic of Yemen prepared the national plan to control Desertification in cooperation with UNEP & ESCWA. This plan was considered as the foundation for national work in Desertification control. This plan include (8) programmes and (41) projects centralized in evaluation, common contribution, correction measures for Desertification control along with socio-economic, insurance against drought implementation of proposed or planned procedures in Desertification evaluation, improvement of range, general contribution, systematic procedures on Desertification control, curing socio-economic sides, insurance against drought, strengthening science and technology and international cooperation in Desertification control.

The plan includes a number of procedures aiming to improve of structural foundation, strengthening condition of knowledge, implemented steps were the development of GDFDC, issuing of environment protection, establishments of funds for agriculture and fish production, water resources authority and re-activation of high tree planting committee.

Planned steps are to establish the national committee for Desertification control in which all related ministries, organizations, official, social and voluntary associations of concern will be represented.

It is worth to mention here that national experts who are contributed effectively in regional and sub-regional national network are contributed in taking all decision.

6) Financial allocations from national budget in support of implementation as well as financial assistance to strengthen implementation.

Republic of Yemen has taken necessary steps to insure financing projects of Desertification control according to annual financing plan, which suits projects and programmes in five years plan, national plan to combat Desertification. It makes these steps sustainable through creating a mechanism of finance. The most important step is establishment of funding source to encourage agriculture and fish production.

Important source of finance is one Yemeni Riyal comes from the selling of one litre of diesel in the country along with government budget allocated in general budget of the Government, in addition to Aids and Grants.

Regarding finance allocations from national budget, it is paid for the needed man-power, for implementation of the national plan of Desertification, provide building furniture needed for national coordination body as well as the participation to financing the projects already financed externally, such as watershed management and re-use of sewage water which is financed by The Kingdom of Netherlands and the Government provide Yemeni Riyals 145 Millions. Republic of Yemen is classified as developing country, thus it obtain finance and technical support from a number of governments and organizations, mainly FAO, UNDP, IDA, IFAD.

Inspite of finance resources allocated from local budget and foreign financial Aid. Implementation of the national programme in Desertification control needs an additional financial and technical support. Regarding financial support it could depend on the following fundamentals:

- One) Provide extra finance allocations from national budget to combat Desertification.*
- Two) provide financial component needed for Desertification control in development projects.*
- Three) Encourage the establishment of projects in international borders and search for funding these projects.*
- Four) Increase the coordination with local finance sources.*
- Five) Encourage the contribution of Regional and International finances sources.*

Regarding technical cooperation it is proposed to develop this cooperation with developed countries, international and regional organizations of concern as follows:

- One) To upgrade scientific standards in Desertification control*
- Two) Support projects implementing traditional techniques related water harvesting and resources conservation.*
- Three) Encourage stability of local rural communities and decrease immigration to towns.*
- Four) Establishment of specialized centre for Desertification control.*
- Five) Encourage application of modern technology in providing energy alternatives.*
- Six) Increase utilization of remote sensing and, GIS, in Desertification monitoring and control as well as establishment of qualitative data base.*

7) Review of bench marks and indicators utilized to measure progress and an assessment thereof.

Till now Yemen has no systematic benchmarks and indicators to measure application of program of work. For this reason a number of benchmarks and indicators were used derived from the documents distributed by the permanent secretary of UNCCD or used and approved by some countries parties. The following, is benchmarks and indicator depends on: -

- One) Establishment of environmental protection council as a mechanism to observe environment and evaluation.*
- Two) Establishment a unit for evaluation and monitoring within national coordination body as a mechanism for follow up.*
- Three) Starting up the establishment of GIS and foundation of information system.*
- Four) Issuing quarterly and annually reports in the field of Desertification control.*
- Five) Implementation pilot projects and extends its results to similar areas.*
- Six) Re-Activation the role of women through Gender Policy.*
- Seven) Include Desertification control programs within development plans.*
- Eight) Developing coordination with international agencies through signing assignments.*
- Nine) Adopt a number of traditional knowledge which were accumulated with Yemeni farmers through ages.*

From the above mentioned it could be observed that Republic of Yemen started implementing a number of concerned activities related to implementation of UN convention on Desertification. Republic of Yemen faced some obstacles in this respect, such as trained human cadets, lack of modern equipment, which are needed to establish information net-work. Experience showed that cooperation with developed countries, regional and international organizations enabled national coordination body to implement the UNCCD, particularly reactivation of women role and increase people's contribution and training technical cadets.

It is no doubt that continuous implementation of the convention, in wide and better aspects, need additional efforts and provide a number of essential factors mainly technical support, fund allocation, which will help Republic of Yemen to follow the international trend in this domain.