

**Sudanese American Community
Development Organization
(SACDO)**



***SACDO Vision, Strategies and
Roadmap***

(2003-2005)

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SACDO Vision, Strategies and Roadmap (2003-2005)

1.0 Preface:

During the last two decades, the United States has witnessed an increase in the number of Sudanese immigrants. As a result of this growth and expansion in their population, the Sudanese immigrant community in the Washington metropolitan area has realized the importance of defining and establishing organizational entities to meet their different needs and expectations. Many organizations have been created throughout the last two decades to achieve these objectives. The Sudanese American Community Development Organization was established in 1997 to achieve the following objectives:

(for more details please refer to Appendix (1) - Articles of Incorporation of the Sudanese American Community Development Organization)

- a) To be organized exclusively for the educational, cultural, health and charitable purposes.
- b) To create conditions that support and promote the health, education and social services needs of individuals of Sudanese heritage in the Washington metropolitan area, through public awareness, community mobilization, skill building and other services.
- c) To promote understanding and cooperation among Sudanese community members, and between the organization and other ethnic groups.
- d) To preserve and advance the cultural heritage and social values of the Sudanese community.
- e) To advocate cultural exchange, to promote education at all levels, and to cooperate with charitable and other organizations involved in community services.

The Sudanese American Community Development Organization (SACDO) has other derived objectives that include:

- f) Raising the level of awareness among Sudanese immigrants on issues pertinent to adjustment to their new environment.
- g) Keeping the links and ties to the homeland by promoting cultural and social exchange.
- h) Providing forums for social and cultural activities, and facilitating other organizations' initiatives and services.



- i) Facilitating legal, social and health services, consultancy and counseling to the community members by referring them to experts in the respective fields.
- j) Facilitating the establishment of think tanks and professional forums that would research, analyze, and recommend policies and enhancements to benefit and enrich the individuals and the community at large.
- k) Becoming a guardian of all Sudanese knowledge and institutional memory that has been collected or gathered during the course of conducting its business. This includes the community members' information, organization registration papers and correspondence, legal documents, work of the previous Board of Directors, workshop findings and recommendations, Sudanese artists' products and artifacts and any other form of physical or intellectual properties of the members.
- l) Respecting and ensuring the confidentiality of any data or information collected during the course of its conducting its activities and ensuring that access to this information is granted solely for the purpose of promoting its objectives without violating any laws or rules related to the use of this data.

In this essence and from this spirit, and to set the stage for transparency, accountability and involvement, the current Executive Committee is sharing with community members its vision, objectives and approach to accomplish the above objectives.

This document is intended to provide a framework of reference that will drive all the activities of the current SACDO Executive Officers and any other organizational structure that will be formed to support the activities of the current Executive Committee. The interpretation of this document will serve as the basis of accountability and guidance

2.0 Historical Analysis - SACDO Role in Community Development:

It is crucial to recognize and appreciate the commitment, the dedication and the hard work of those who pioneered and volunteered their time, knowledge and expertise to ensure the continuity and success of the SACDO organization. Since its inception and through the years, the Sudanese American Community Development Organization (SACDO) has succeeded in achieving the following:



- a) In the social front, SACDO has worked towards bringing the Sudanese community together through the organization of events, picnics, and youth and sports activities.
- b) In the educational front and with help from the community, SACDO has established weekend schools in the states of Virginia and Maryland.
- c) In the adjustment and awareness front, SACDO has provided support to new immigrants and to the existing community members through counseling, advising, and referrals.
- d) In the heritage link with Sudan, SACDO has organized celebrations of Islamic as well as National Sudanese days that provided a sense of connectivity and sharing with our families and fellow Sudanese in the motherland.
- e) In the cultural front, SACDO has organized and provided Sudanese scholars and leaders with forums to share their knowledge, experience and vision with community members.

That has worked well and provided a satisfactory level of services to the community; however, and due to the increasing number of the Sudanese immigrants and the diversity of their skills, educational background, expectations and issues, new challenges and demands have emerged that require new approaches, problem-solving and methodologies.

3.0 SACDO Challenges and Opportunities:

The current SACDO Board of Directors recognizes the importance and the need to understand and appreciates the following:

- a) There is a need for a fundamental shift in the vision, structures and mechanisms of the SACDO to help deal with the above-mentioned realities in a more efficient manner.
- b) The complexity of the challenges that face the Sudanese community in the Washington metropolitan area dictates the necessity of looking for innovative and comprehensive approaches that would accommodate the diverse and complex nature of Sudanese society.
- c) There is a need to broaden the level of engagement of Sudanese community members in any activity in order to safeguard and guarantee its success.
- d) There is a need to share the responsibilities of accomplishing SACDO's objectives with community members.



- e) There is a need to delegate the responsibilities to professionals and specialists in their fields of expertise.
- f) There is a need to coordinate with existing Sudanese organizations or any organization that will promote the cause of the Sudanese community in the Washington metropolitan area.
- g) There is a need to capitalize on the reconciliatory tone and atmosphere that is gaining momentum here, in Sudan and elsewhere to bring the community together regardless of political, ethnic or social backgrounds.
- h) There is a need to recognize the unlimited opportunities that remain to be explored and utilized.

4.0 SACDO Mission Statements (2003-2005):

During the upcoming two years 2003-2005, the SACDO Board of Directors through its offices and any organizational structure that may be formed, will focus all its energy, resources and efforts to promote, develop and execute the following:

4.1 Identify and categorize SACDO targeted community members:

The SACDO Board of Directors recognizes the importance of revisiting the membership and how it is defined and approached. The SACDO Executive will work on establishing processes and procedures to reach out to the different segments of the community by promoting the concepts of a constructive and value-added membership rather than the classical voluntary approach, time and money consuming.

4.2 Recognize the diversity of the SACDO community base

Although the SACDO is a non-political, non-governmental, community-based organization, it is imperative to emphasize that it should reflect the broad spectrum of the sentiments, aspirations, and general mood of the Sudanese immigrants in the Washington metropolitan area.

These values could be summed up as strengthening democratic values and processes, functioning in a transparent manner, operating with responsibility and full accountability, and reflecting the collectively-held social values of tolerance, coexistence, and communal support.



4.3 Establish Sudanese Professional Forums:

As part of its effort to empower and engage the Sudanese Community in the Washington metropolitan area, and as part of its understanding of the important roles to be played by professionals in shaping the course and the future of the SACDO community, the SACDO Executive Committee has put a lot of emphasis on the active participation of the Sudanese professional towards providing a quality service to our community base.

The SACDO Executive Committee will coordinate with the Sudanese professionals to create different forums and workgroups to empower its membership and to provide services to the community where applicable.

4.4 Build on previous achievements and accomplishments of SACDO

The SACDO Executive Committee recognizes and appreciates the accomplishments and achievements of the previous SACDO Board of Directors. It will focus its effort to build upon what has been accomplished and extend the success and the achievements to new levels. The SACDO Board of Directors will focus as much as possible to build on the successes in areas such as sport and music; and it will work on strengthening the neighborhood, coordinating committees, and exploring and utilizing the services that the federal, state, county and municipal institutions provide.

It will also benefit from previous experiences and the lessons learned along the way in order to avoid the mistakes and pitfalls that were encountered in the past.

4.5 Promote coordination and cooperation with other Sudanese organizations in the Washington metropolitan area:

The SACDO Board of Directors clearly recognizes that, in the course of serving the Sudanese community, there are a great many areas to be covered, issues to be dealt with, challenges to be addressed, and needs to be met.

The SACDO Board of Directors understands the right of any group of Sudanese community members to coordinate their efforts or establish an organizational body that will serve their interests and needs. It views this as a step forward towards empowering the Sudanese community and has no intention whatsoever to disrupt, distract or in any way hinder the



efforts of these organizations. It will focus its energy and resources to coordinate with these organizations and will reach out to them with the message that it would be of mutual benefit for all these organizations to orchestrate their efforts, share their resources, and exchange their experiences in order to better serve our targeted community and grass roots.

4.6 Establish a permanent SACDO Headquarters:

One of the biggest limitations that had always hindered the efforts of realizing any SACDO activities or plans is to find a location that will accommodate and host these activities. The SACDO Executive Committee, in coordination with Sudanese realtors and experts, will work towards identifying a location that can be used as a headquarters for the SACDO organization.

It is worth mentioning that while identifying a reasonable location to host all the envisioned activities is crucial objective for the SACDO success, it is also perfectly understood that it will require a lot of funds and money to be realized. The SACDO community is pledging to the community members to contribute generously to SACDO Headquarters initiative.

4.7 Identify sources of funding and solicit donations and contributions:

The SACDO Executive Committee recognizes that any activity requires money, time and effort. The Committee will work towards identifying new sources for funds and grants that will finance activities without violating the ethics or the spirit of this organization.

In this regard, the SACDO Executive Committee will direct its efforts to build upon previous steps that have been taken in identifying sources for funding. It will consult with the community members who have expertise in the fields of proposal and grant writing and have a good understanding of the requirements of these grants.

The SACDO Executive Committee will reach out to the community and encourage their generous donations and contribution to the cause of this organization.

The SACDO will adopt a financial transparency approach by providing freedom of access to all its financial records, contributions and donation history.



4.8 Implement 2002 SACDO workshop recommendations

The previous SACDO Board of Directors (2002-2003) successfully coordinated and conducted a workshop that was held on January 14, 2003. The SACDO workshop was a successful endeavor and a right step towards genuine reform of the SACDO roles and functions. The SACDO workshop recommended the following changes:

1. Constitutional changes and amendments:

Constitutional amendments should be made to provide the SACDO with the flexibility to become a business-fashioned and action-oriented organization. It further recommended a name change of the organization to include and recognize the American components, aspects and nature of this organization.

2. Organizational and structural changes:

- A consultative and advisory council should be established to provide guidance and continuity of the legacy of the organization. It should have a term of work that lasts longer and overlaps with the terms of the SACDO Executive Committee.
- The term of service of the SACDO Executive Committee should be extended to two years rather than one year. The purpose of this is to give the Executive Committee the chance to achieve its goals and objectives.

The SACDO Executive Committee will execute the recommendations of the workshop as mandated by the general assembly.

4.9 Promote social services for SACDO members

The SACDO Executive Committee will promote social services for the community through identifying the different categories and segments of the community and reaching out to each of these segments and categories in a way that addresses and understands their social needs and concerns. The SACDO Executive Committee will coordinate activities, workshops, celebrations and social events as well as providing consultations and counseling, and referrals to professionals and experts in those areas. It will also work towards developing innovative ways and methods to support the social needs of the community members.



4.10 Provide affordable education and vocational training to the community

The SACDO Board of Directors will work toward identifying the educational and training needs of the different segments of the community and will work towards providing or coordinating affordable and reasonable training.

The SACDO will continue to support and enhance its legacy work in establishing weekend schools and will reach out to the existing schools with the aim of standardizing the school syllabus through the help of educational professionals and experts.

The SACDO Board of Directors will work to provide affordable continuous education opportunities for community members in the areas of computers, daycare and other possible training options.

One of the long-term objectives is to establish accredited and recognized schools that meet the standards of the US department of education.

4.11 Promote cultural interaction and Sudanese heritage and arts

The SACDO Executive Committee will work towards maintaining strong ties with our cultural and ethical values. It will promote the continuity of the Sudanese heritage by coordinating cultural events and inviting Sudanese writers, poets, painters, musicians, professionals and scholars to share their work, knowledge and expertise with community members. Special emphasis will be put towards reaching out to the second-generation Sudanese by encouraging their participation in such events and increasing their level of involvement.

4.12 Empower the Sudanese women and families in the Washington metropolitan area

The SACDO Executive Committee will focus its energy and resources towards empowering the Sudanese women in the Washington metropolitan area. It will do so by identifying and addressing the issues and the challenges that face the Sudanese woman in her difficult task of raising a Sudanese family in Diaspora while finding her way through all the challenges of adapting to a very demanding environment. The SACDO Executive Committee will work hand in hand with the Sudanese women's organizations in the Washington metropolitan area to achieve the maximum results and returns.



4.13 Reach out to young Sudanese in the Washington metropolitan area

The SACDO Executive Committee will reach out to the young Sudanese in the Washington metropolitan area and get them involved by establishing programs and activities that address their needs and concerns.

4.14 Involve and engage second generation Sudanese- Americans:

It is equally vital that the new generation of young Sudanese-Americans become the most targeted group in terms of crafting programs that will bring them into the mix to be trained to lead the organization in the near future. Equipped with acquired educational and training experiences this generation will be suited to rejuvenate the SACDO provided that they are grounded in our culture and values. A flexible and an accommodating approach that successfully blends such diverse elements into a unified vision will turn SACDO into a robust, vibrant, and efficient organization.

4.15 Recognize the roles and the contribution of our senior generations

The SACDO Executive Committee values the contributions of our senior Sudanese community members, and appreciates their roles in the development and progress of our motherland. It will work towards highlighting their work and contributions and encourage them to share their wisdom and thoughts with the new generations.

The senior Sudanese members will play an active and engaging role through their membership in the consultative and advisory panels.

4.16 Advertise and highlight the accomplishments of the community members in all fields

The SACDO Board of Directors will advertise and highlight the accomplishments of Sudanese professionals, students, businessmen and any other category in a way that will promote and set a model to be followed. The SACDO will celebrate their accomplishments and will recognize them in its annual events and celebrations.



4.17 Protect and safeguard the SACDO institutional memory and knowledge bank

The SACDO Executive Committee will focus its energy and resources in collecting, organizing and archiving all the artifacts that have been collected throughout the years and work to make them available and accessible to its community base.

The SACDO Executive Committee will abide by all the legal terms and laws that govern access to copyrighted materials. It will ensure the confidentiality and privacy of any personal data that is collected during the course of conducting its activities or fulfilling its obligations.

4.18 Develop a comprehensive SACDO databank

The SACDO Executive Committee will work on building a comprehensive databank that will encompass all of the artifacts and data collected, created or compiled by the community members.

It will also be a source of statistical and demographical information about community that can help in many respects for the advancement of the cause of the community.

The SACDO databank will provide an easy and secured access to the information collected while respecting its sensitivity, privacy and copyrights. It will work to make this databank accessible to the community through the use of the advanced technological means such as the use of the internet, emails and other technological means as well as through traditional methods.

4.19 Promote Sudanese entrepreneurship

The SACDO Board of Directors will promote Sudanese entrepreneurship and businesses by providing them with ways and means of advertising their business and recommending them to its community members. In return, the SACDO Executive Committee expects an active involvement from Sudanese businessmen in SACDO activities and generous donations and contributions.

The SACDO will leverage its tax-exempt status to encourage and coordinate donations and fund-raising campaigns.

5.0 Conclusion



The SACDO Board of Directors recognizes the challenges of the above tasks and understands the importance of the cooperation and the collaboration of all community members to make this happen.

Successful achievement of the goals and objectives stated above would strengthen and widen the participating base of members, render popular engagement possible and hence pave the way for the SACDO to become active and involved in most of the multicultural functions that take place in this region.

It is crucial to spread the understanding that individuals and organizations need to be accommodated within the structure of a wider organization to ensure their safety, protection, and support, and make it possible for their voices to be heard. The SACDO could have the potential of playing the role of the unifying factor among the Sudanese immigrants if this vision is wisely adopted and the suggested strategies and tactics are effectively implemented.