

**THE NATIONAL WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR  
COUNCIL ACT 1999**

**Act No. 20 of 1999**

*I assent*

*20<sup>th</sup> August 1999*

CASSAM UTEEM  
*President of the Republic*

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## **An Act**

### **To provide for the establishment of the National Women Entrepreneur Council**

Enacted by the Parliament of Mauritius, as follows –

#### **1. Short title**

This Act may be cited as the National Women Entrepreneur Council Act 1999.

#### **2. Interpretation**

In this Act –

“Committee” means the Executive Committee specified in section 6;

“Council: means the National Women Entrepreneur Council established under section 3;

“women entrepreneur” means a women engaged, on a full-time or part-time basis, in a self-employed capacity in an income generating activity, relating to production, manufacture, sales, import, export of goods, foodstuffs, materials or the provision or sale of services or other similar activity;

“Secretary” means the Secretary of the Council.

#### **3. Establishment of the National Women Entrepreneur Council**

- (1) There is established for the purposes of this Act the National Women Entrepreneur Council.
- (2) The Council shall be a body corporate.

#### **4. Objects and functions of the Council**

- (1) The object of the Council shall be –
  - (a) to establish and maintain effective communication between the Council and women entrepreneur organization;
  - (b) to ensure coordination of activities of women entrepreneurs associations;

- (c) to identify actions and projects that will promote entrepreneurial activities of women;
- (d) to evaluate and assess the needs of women entrepreneurs,
- (e) to establish training programme, aimed at improving the skills and management aptitudes of women entrepreneurs;
- (f) to promote cooperation and research with respect to women entrepreneurship development;
- (g) to develop working links and affiliation with other bodies, whether in Mauritius or abroad, having same objectives;
- (h) to advise the Minister on women entrepreneurship development and implementation of programmes for such development;
- (i) examine and evaluate the contribution of women entrepreneurs to the various sectors of development in the light of national needs and priorities;
- (j) study specific areas where the development of women entrepreneurship need to be strengthened.

## **5. Membership of the Council**

- (1) Any association of women entrepreneurs which is registered under the Registration of Associations Act or any women entrepreneur may apply to the Council for membership.
- (2) An application under subsection (1) shall be accompanied –
  - (a) in the case of an association, by a certified copy of its rules;
  - (b) in the case of an individual, by a statement of the activity or activities of the women entrepreneur.
- (3) Upon receipt of an application under subsection (1), the Council shall examine such application and admit or refuse membership to the applicant.
- (4) Where the rules of an association are amended or the activities of a women entrepreneur are changed, the association or the individual shall inform the Council of such amendment or change within 21 days.
- (5) A member shall, upon admission, pay such fee as the Council may determine.

- (6) A member shall pay such annual membership fee, as the Council may determine, at latest on the 31 July of each year.

## **6. Committee**

- (1) The Council shall be administered and managed by an Executive Committee.
- (2) The Committee shall consist of –
- (a) a Chairperson;
  - (b) a representative of the Ministry responsible for the subject o women;
  - (c) a representative of the Industrial and Vocational Training Board;
  - (d) a representative of the Small and Medium Industries Development Organisation;
  - (e) a representative of a financial institution dealing with entrepreneurs;
  - (f) 4 women entrepreneurs;
- (3) The members of the Committee, except the ex-officio members, shall be appointed by the Minister.
- (4) The members of the Committee shall be paid such fees or allowances as the Minister may determine.
- (5) The members of the Committee shall not be considered as public officers by reason only of their appointment under this section.

## **7. Tenure of office**

- (1) Subject to subsection (2), a member of the Committee shall hold office for a period of 2 years and is eligible for reappointment.
- (2) No person shall sit on the committee for more than 2 consecutive terms.

## **8. Secretary and staff**

- (1) The Committee may appoint, with the approval of the Minister, and on such terms and conditions as it thinks fit –

- (a) a Secretary, who shall be responsible for the execution of the policy, and the control and management of the day to day business, of the Council;
  - (b) such employees as may be necessary for the proper discharge of functions of the Council under this Act.
- (2) Every employee shall be under the administrative control of the Secretary.

#### **9. Duties of the Secretary**

- (1) The Secretary shall –
- (a) have the custody of all books, deeds and documents relating to the Council;
  - (b) take and keep minutes of all proceedings of the Council and the Committee;
  - (c) forward to the Minister every year, on or before 31 August , a statement of accounts and the balance sheet of the council;
  - (d) submit to the Minister an annual report of the activities of the Council; and
  - (e) perform such other duties as the Committee may assign to him.

#### **10. Meeting of the Council**

- (1) The Council shall hold its first general meeting within 6 months from the commencement of this Act and as from the year following the first general meeting, an annual meeting not later than 30 September of each year.
- (2) The Meeting of the Council shall be held at such place and at such time as the Committee may determine.
- (3) The Secretary shall give at least 21 days notice in writing of the date, time, place, and agenda of an annual general meeting to the members of the Council.
- (4) The Committee shall submit to the Secretary 10 days before the annual general meeting the annual report and the audited accounts of the Council for inclusion in the agenda of the annual general meeting.
- (5) Six members shall constitute a quorum.

- (6) A special meeting of the Council may be convened by the Secretary at the request of the Council or upon receipt for the written request of at least half of the total number members.

#### **11. Meetings of the Committee**

- (1) The Committee shall meet at least once monthly, at such place and such time as the Chairperson may determine.
- (2) Six members shall constitute a quorum.
- (3) The Committee shall regulate its proceedings in such manner as it thinks.
- (4) The Secretary shall give at least 7 days notice of the date, time, place, and agenda of any meeting of the Committee.

#### **12. Funds of the Council**

- (1) The funds of the Council shall consist of –
- (a) money raised by means of membership admission fees and membership annual fees;
  - (b) any money appropriated from the Consolidated Funds and Capital Fund and any other money accruing to the Council from any other source.
- (2) The funds of the Council shall be applied solely towards the promotion the objects of the Council.

#### **13. Termination of membership**

- (1) The Committee may cancel the membership of an association of women entrepreneurs or any women entrepreneur where such association or women entrepreneur –
- (a) has, subject to such regulations as may be made, failed to pay any membership fee at latest 3 months before the annual general meeting;

(b) acts in any way which, in the opinion of the Committee, is prejudicial to the interests of the Council;

(c) when the registration of an association is cancelled or it is wound up, or when an individual has been declared bankrupt or has ceased to be a women entrepreneur.

(2) Any member whose membership is cancelled under sub-section (1) may appeal to the Minister within 21 days of the communication of the decision to him.

(3) The appeal shall be in such form as the Minister may determine.

#### **14. Execution of documents**

(1) Subject to subsection (2), all documents shall be deemed to be executed by or on behalf of the Council if signed by the Chairperson of the Committee.

(2) Every cheque of the Council shall be signed by the Chairperson of the Committee and the Secretary of the Council.

#### **15. Donations and legacies**

Article 910 of the code Napoleon shall not apply to the Council.

#### **16. Exemption from duty**

The Council shall be exempt from payment of any duty on donation and legacies received by it.

#### **17. Power of the Minister**

The Minister may, in the public interest, give directions of a general character not inconsistent with this Act, to the Council and the Council shall comply with those directions.

#### **18. Regulations**

The Minister may make such regulations, as he thinks fit for the purposes of this Act.

**19. Consequential amendments**

(1) Subject to subsections (2) and (3), the Schedule to the Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act is amended in Part II by inserting in its appropriate alphabetical place the following item –

“National Women Entrepreneur Council”

(2) For the purposes of the Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act the period extending from the commencement of this Act to 30 June next following shall be deemed to be first financial year of the Council.

(3) Section 7(1) of the Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act shall not apply to the first financial year of the Council.

(4) The auditor to be appointed under section 5(1) of the Statutory Bodies (Accounts and Audit) Act shall be the Director of Audit.

**20. Commencement**

This Act shall come into operation on a day to be fixed by Proclamation.

Passed by the National Assembly on the twenty-seventh day of July one thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine.

ANDRE POMPON  
*Clerk of the National Assembly*