

## International Mountain Day at Utah Valley University



On December 6th, 2022, I attended the International Mountain Day celebrations held at Utah Valley University. The event was hosted by the Sustainable Mountain Development (SMD) Club which is part of the Utah International Mountain Forum (UIMF). The main theme of this International Mountain Day was “Women Move Mountains” and so, the main focus was gender inequality faced by women in mountainous regions.

I gave a brief speech of about five minutes on “The Status of Women In Sudan and South Sudan”. Both countries are mountainous, and they face very high percentages of gender inequality. I talked about some of the issues women in both countries face such as gender-based violence, child marriages, harsh cultural practices such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), gender inequality in education, gender health disparities among others. I also spoke about the things the governments in both countries and organizations such as the United Nations are doing to solve these problems. Some of these include campaigns held to bring awareness to these issues. I was also able to talk about some of my experiences as a woman growing up in South Sudan.



*Jokudu Jada (Winnie) speaks at the event*

This event was held through the student engaged learning model and through this, I was able to address the status of women in Sudan and South Sudan. Other students also spoke for example Priyanka Prem Kumar who spoke about the challenges women in India face. The student engaged learning model provides a great opportunity for students to address real world problems and through this issues of those facing inequality are brought to the forefront. It involves students of all backgrounds and international students such as myself also get such a great opportunity to be involved in these events.

The Sustainable Mountain Development and Utah International Mountain Forum clubs did such a great job in putting this event together. At the end of the event, all those involved that is; club members and speakers were awarded certificates and gifts.



*UVU faculty and students in the audience*

Events like this are also a great way for students to develop their skills in many ways since a lot goes into planning and putting up such events and at the same time, it is a great way to show students that they too can be involved in discussing real world issues and bringing awareness to these issues so that possible solutions can be provided.

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