

# Democratic Governance

Democratic governance with a focus on inclusive participation, responsive institutions and values regarding human rights and justice, gender equality and women's empowerment remains a critical and strategic part of the nature of the State. Both states and citizens/people need to play their role in ensuring that human development becomes a reality for all. The state alone cannot be expected to deliver in an equitable, pro-poor and gender-sensitive manner – but neither can citizens play their role effectively without an inclusive, responsive, and capable State.

Reclaiming the State is a reaffirmation of the Charter of Principles of the United Nations, of which Sudan is a Member State, and is at the centre of democratic governance discourse which points towards a transformative agenda that goes beyond the top-down technical fixes “of the market-based rational choice models to one that integrates the political economy perspective.

## Quick Facts:

*Sudan held the first multi-party elections in **24 years** in April 2010; **15.7m** people (81% of all eligible voters) registered for the election. (NEC); over **65%** voter turnout*

***1,051** women candidates contested for seats set aside for women in the National Assembly; **2,306** women candidates ran for local state assemblies seats;*

National ownership and the participation and inclusion of multiple stakeholders, including women, the poor and other marginalized groups are central to the transformative agenda of democratic governance. While both civil society and markets have a role in the process of

development; the State is by far the more concrete and evolved form of social contract. Therefore, not only does it have, but it must also retain the primary role in ensuring human development and human rights, with equity, sustainability and peace.

An inclusive, responsive and capable state can provide enabling conditions for market and civil society, the primacy of the state – as the site of political process and as an expression of the sovereignty of citizens - is integral to the idea of democracy and development.

## Recommendations:

A new constitution for Sudan should include principles of: **“Inclusiveness”** to address dimensions of participation, non-discrimination, human rights and women's rights;

## THE INTERIM NATIONAL CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE SUDAN, 2005

### *Nature of the State Article 1*

*Article 1 (1): The Republic of the Sudan is an independent, sovereign State. It is a democratic, decentralized, multi-cultural, multilingual, multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious country where such diversities co-exist.*

*Article 1 (2): The State is committed to the respect and promotion of human dignity; and is founded on justice, equality and the advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms and assures multi-partism.*

*Article 1 (3): The Sudan is an all embracing homeland where religions and cultures are sources of strength, harmony and inspiration.*

### *Social Justice*

*Article 12 (1) The State shall develop policies and strategies to ensure social justice among all people of the Sudan, through ensuring means of livelihood and opportunities of employment....*





“**Responsiveness**” to focus on transparency, accountability, delivery and quality of services; and Engendering a **capable state** with informed institutions to effectively and efficiently raise and manage resources; deliver human development and to ensure equity, sustainability and peace.” More specifically, a new Constitution should affirm the Sudan as a:

1. Multi-party democratic and decentralized State;
2. A State committed to the respect and promotion of human dignity;
3. A State founded on justice equality and the advancement of human rights and fundamental freedoms
4. Commit to the equitable distribution of resources and the nation’s wealth

### **UNDP Democratic Governance Group**

The response to the recent global economic crisis by many countries around the world, particularly developed nations, has demonstrated that the state has an important role to play in addressing critical challenges. This is also an important lesson for developing countries as public institutions must have the capacity to address these difficulties while at the same time delivering the benefits of human development.

In response to these demands, UNDP's Democratic Governance Group (DGG) is focusing on enhancing the capacity of the state to make it more responsive, capable, and inclusive. The Democratic Governance Practice (DGP) is supporting this agenda by fostering inclusive participation and promoting responsive institutions, underpinned by international agreed gender, human rights and anti-corruption principles.

Working with scarce public resources to target people in need means that governments need to improve the delivery of services while ensuring equity and inclusion at the economic, social, and political levels. Similarly, charting a sustainable course out of crisis without abandoning human development targets requires increased stakeholder participation in governance processes and strong public institutions that can effectively respond to any challenge. It also requires a civil society that can hold their governments to account. Together, these elements set the agenda for UNDPs DGG's work.

### **UNDP in Sudan**

UNDP Sudan is implementing a comprehensive governance programme that addresses public administration reform, decentralization and local government development, civil society participation, justice sectors support and elections and other democratic processes. UNDP Sudan’s democratic governance efforts are focused on three main areas:

- 1. Expanding people’s opportunities to participate in political decision-making** through support to elections at National and State levels; and support to women’s participation;
- 2. Making democratic institutions more accountable and responsive** through institution building and capacity development support to the national and state assemblies; and justice sector institutions and empowerment of citizens to seek transparency and accountability
- 3. Promoting the principles of democratic governance** through support to local government development and public expenditure management systems; and citizen informed public policy-making