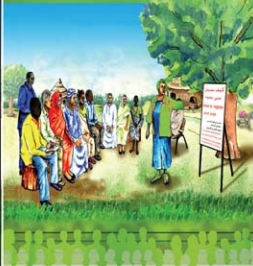


# Civic and Voter Education Guidebook



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## Message from NEC Chairman

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

This Civic /Voter Education Guidebook has been prepared as a tool for members of Sudan's civil society to use during the upcoming elections period. It is expected that you will take this knowledge, memorize it, and share the information with others. Please carry this guidebook as a reference for when you are conducting your own civic /voter education awareness programs.

The guidebook is divided into four main parts that relate to election awareness-raising:

1. Introduction
2. An Overview of Sudan's Election Process
3. Conducting Civic /Voter Education
4. Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

For quick access to the information you need, please refer to the Table of Contents.

We wish you every success in our common goal of raising our fellow Sudanese citizen's awareness and participation in the upcoming democratic events. I urge you to continue to keep well informed about new information relating to election rules and regulations released by the National Elections Commission (NEC). The NEC has a High Committee in each state and at the level of Southern Sudan where information can be accessed.

Please also regularly check the NEC website at <http://nec.org.sd> for up-to-date and accurate information.

Sincerely,

Note: This guidebook was produced at the time of registration for the voters' list. A future edition will provide more precise details with regard to the stages of polling.

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## Part 1 : Introduction

### Elections Are Coming in 2010!

Sudan is preparing for six elections. Three elections will be for positions that have **executive** powers within Sudan. This means that they are responsible for the public administration at each level of government. The other three elections are for **legislative** positions. The people who are elected through these elections work within the Legislative Assemblies to make and amend laws.

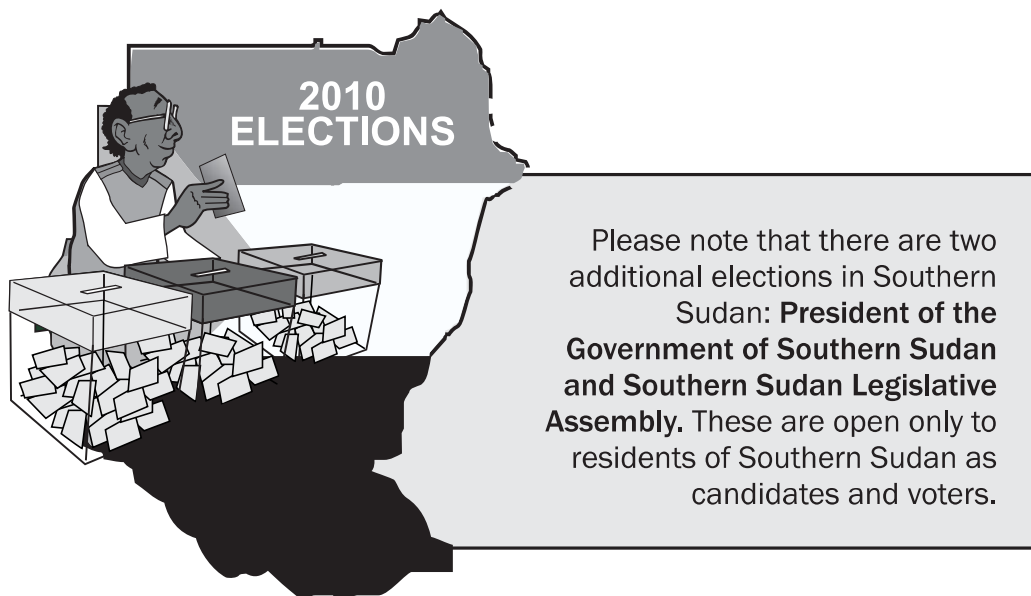
**The 2010 elections will be for the following positions:**

**Executive Elections:**

1. President of the Republic of the Sudan
2. President of the Government of Southern Sudan  
(*This election is only for residents of Southern Sudan.*)
3. State Governors

**Legislative Elections:**

4. National Assembly
5. Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly  
(*This election is only for residents of Southern Sudan.*)
6. State Assemblies



**Find out more details in the pages that follow!**

## First You Must Register to Vote!

A key component of Sudan's elections is that you have to register to vote. The voter registration process ensures that all eligible voters -and only eligible voters- are able to vote. In the Sudan, NEC is responsible for preparing and maintaining the electoral register or list of voters.

### Importance of Voter Registration Awareness

From a civic /voter education perspective, it is crucial to spread awareness before the voter registration process starts. Voter registration is important because if people have not registered and their names are not on the official Electoral Register, they will not be allowed to vote and will miss out on their democratic right to choose their leaders.

#### **Voter Registration is Different from the Census!**

Some people in the Sudan might confuse the Voter Registration process with the Census process. It is our responsibility to inform them that voter registration for elections is a completely different process from the Census! If you were counted – or not counted for the Census- it makes no difference.

Furthermore, even if you have registered as a political party member, you will still need to register in person with the NEC to be eligible to vote.

**YOU NEED TO REGISTER DURING THE VOTER REGISTRATION PERIOD IN ORDER TO VOTE IN THE 2010 ELECTIONS!**



## PART 2: Overview of Sudan's Election Process

### How Did We Get To Elections?

The main political actors in Sudan have agreed to have Elections in Sudan. The details of the agreements are included in four main documents: the CPA, the Interim National Constitution, the Interim Constitution of the Government of Southern Sudan and the National Elections Act of 2008:



#### Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA)

The holding of free and fair elections is a key provision.

#### The Interim National Constitution

Confirms the right to vote as a fundamental right of Sudanese citizens.

#### The Interim Constitution of the Government of Southern Sudan

Stipulates the running of elections at all levels in accordance with the CPA and the Constitutions.

#### National Elections Act of 2008

- According to the Act, an independent, impartial and transparent body called the National Elections Commission (NEC) has the authority to organize and conduct elections in Sudan.
- The Act provides the basic legal framework for NEC to organize and conduct elections. It includes provisions on: electoral constituencies; electoral register; nominations; campaigns; polling; counting; and declaration of results.
- The Act also defines election offences, and the roles and responsibilities of political parties, candidates and media during the elections.
- NEC is also responsible for organizing and conducting the referendum in Darfur;
- But please note that the referenda in Southern Sudan and Abyei are not the responsibility of NEC. Separate commissions will be established for those referenda.
- Rules and Procedures for conducting elections will be determined by the NEC.



## Who Is Responsible for Elections?

The only body responsible for conducting the elections is the **National Elections Commission (NEC)**.

### The Structure of the NEC



#### **NEC Commissioners:**

The NEC has nine members (or Commissioners). They are appointed by the President with the consent of the First Vice President and approval of two-thirds of the National Assembly members. The Chairperson and Deputy are appointed from among the Commissioners by the President with the consent of the First Vice President.

Commissioners serve for six years, and may be re-appointed by the Presidency for an additional term. NEC Commissioners are based in Khartoum.

#### **NEC Commissioners' Eligibility Criteria:**

Persons appointed to NEC must be Sudanese; be independent, competent, non-partisan and impartial; be at least 35 years of age; be of sound mind; be literate, preferably holding a University degree or the status of a Court of Appeal Judge; have not been convicted in the previous seven years of a crime involving honesty or moral turpitude. In addition, Commissioners cannot be candidates in the elections or agents of a candidate during their term in office.

#### **NEC Secretariat:**

The NEC has a Secretariat comprising electoral and technical staff. The Secretariat is managed by the Secretary General.

#### **NEC's Independence and transparency:**

The NEC must perform its functions and duties independently, impartially and transparently and without any interference.

To ensure NEC's independence and transparency, the Commission is financially, administratively and technically independent. The Commission has an independent budget and is subject to regular audits.

NEC decisions are taken by a majority vote of Commissioners. In case there is a tie when deciding on an issue, the NEC Chairperson can break the tie provided at least half of the members are present in the session.

**High Committees at Southern Sudan and state level:**

The NEC has a High Committee at the level of Southern Sudan and a High Committee in each state. Each High Committee comprises 5 independent members and some technical staff. In addition, NEC has appointed a Returning Elections Officer at the level of Southern Sudan and in each state.

**Branch Committees:**

High Committees may form temporary Branch Committees with NEC's approval.

**Election Officers:**

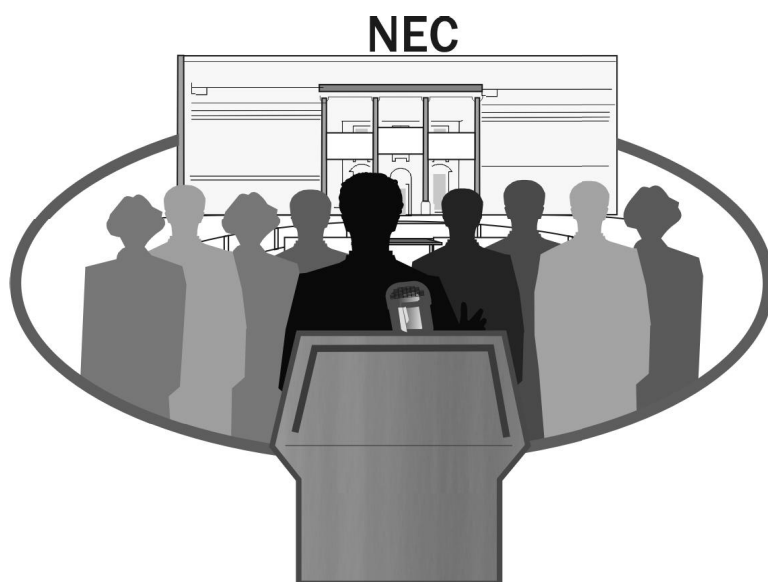
Election officers are recruited for each geographical constituency (geographical constituency is defined on page 8). They are tasked with organizing and conducting voter registration, polling, and sorting & counting.

**Polling Centre Chiefs:**

Each polling centre will have a Chief who will be responsible for carrying out polling, sorting & counting processes.

**Delegation of Powers:**

The NEC can delegate powers or responsibilities to its members or any committee or office.



## Key Aspects of the National Election Act

### Executive and Legislative elections

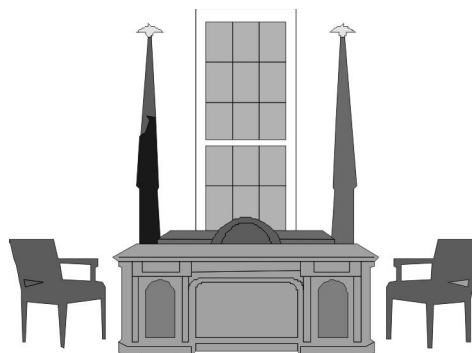
The following executive and legislative elections will be held in 2010:

1. President of the Republic of the Sudan (1 seat)
2. President of the Government of Southern Sudan (1 seat)
3. State Governors (1 seat per state)
4. National Assembly (450 seats)
5. Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly (170 seats)
6. State Assemblies (48 seats except Khartoum (84) and Southern Kordofan (54))

### A. Executive Elections

#### 1. President of the Republic of the Sudan and President of the Government of Southern Sudan

These two elections are held under the absolute majority system. This means that in order to win, a candidate must receive more than half of all of the valid votes cast (50% of the valid votes + 1 vote at least).



If no candidate receives more than half of the votes in the first round of elections, there will be a 'second round' or 'run-off' election between the two candidates who received the most votes in the first round. In the second round, the candidate with more votes than the other candidate wins the election, no matter what percentage of the total valid votes it is.

#### 2. State Governors

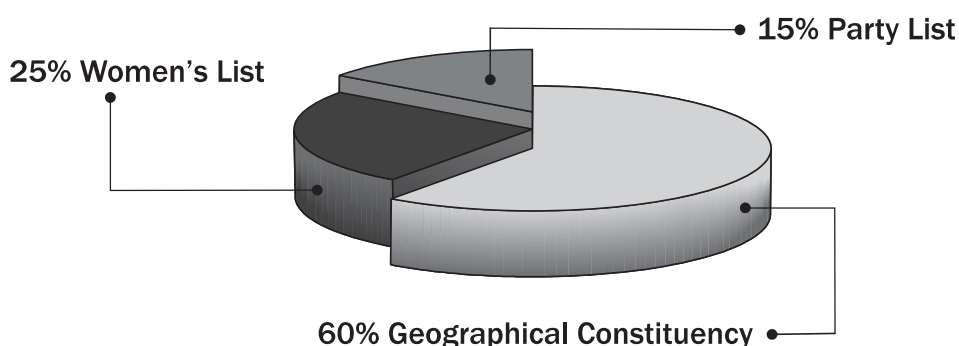
Elections to the office of the governor in each state are held in accordance with the simple majority system. This means that in order to win, a candidate only needs to obtain the highest number of valid votes, no matter what percentage of the total valid votes it is.

## B. Legislative Elections

### 1. Seat Allocation

In the case of the National, Southern Sudan and State Legislative Assembly elections, the seats are allocated to three groups of candidates in the following manner: 25 percent of the seats are allocated to candidates elected from women's lists; 15 percent are allotted to candidates elected from party lists; and 60 percent of the seats in each assembly have been set aside for geographical constituency candidates.

The following diagram shows the division of seats in the legislative elections:



#### 1.1. Party Lists & Women's Lists: Proportional Representation



The Legislative Assembly elections use the 'Proportional Representation' system for the Women's List and Party List seats. A proportional representation election is one in which parties win seats in proportion to the number of valid votes they receive.

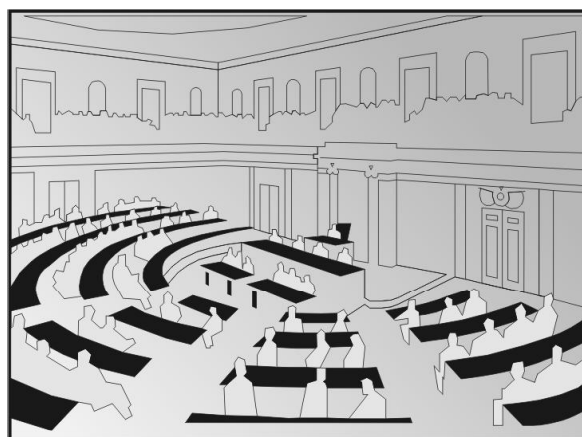
Each party contesting the elections may submit a list of candidates (men and women) for the Party List and a list (women only) for the Women's List to NEC. The number of seats that a party or women's list wins in an electoral constituency will be in proportion to the number of votes the list received in that constituency.



## 1.2. Geographical Constituency Candidates

According to the National Elections Act, 60 percent of Sudan's lawmakers at national, Southern Sudan and state levels will be elected as representatives of **geographical constituencies**.

Geographical constituencies are voting districts formed by the NEC. Constituencies are created to ensure that the needs and interests of the people in each geographical area are represented in the various Legislative Assemblies. Each geographical constituency will send one representative to the Legislative Assembly. This means that during the election, there will be separate ballot papers for each constituency listing the candidates seeking to represent that district at the Legislative Assembly.



## Steps in the Election Calendar

### Step 1: Constituency Delimitation

As each election is for a different level of government, the constituency boundaries are different for each election. For the President of the Sudan, the constituency is the entire country; for the President of the Government of Southern Sudan, the constituency is Southern Sudan; and for each state's governor, the constituency is the respective state.

The process of forming these geographical constituencies is called constituency delimitation. NEC is responsible for forming or delimiting the constituencies for the Legislative Assembly elections following the publication of the population census results. It uses official population figures when forming constituencies, although other factors such as geography and population distribution are also considered.

Thus, there are two types of geographical constituencies in each state—one for the **National Assembly** and one for the **State Assembly**. In addition, each southern state has constituencies to elect members of the **Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly**. Constituencies of the same type will have approximately the same population, but your constituency for the State Assembly will be a lot smaller than your constituency for the National Assembly.

### Step 2: Voter Registration

Voter registration is the process of registering eligible voters- and only eligible voters- onto an Electoral Register so that they can participate in elections. Keeping and updating the Electoral Register is the responsibility of the NEC. To vote, you must be registered, and to register, you must present yourself in person to a Registration Centre.





### Who is eligible to register?

To be eligible to register for the elections, a person must be Sudanese, at least 18 years of age by Registration, of sound mind, reside in the constituency where he /she is registering for at least 3 months before the date of closure of the register, and must not be registered in another constituency. If the head of the registration team has no doubt as to a person's eligibility, this is sufficient. However, eligible voters should bring any supporting documents (or a person who can vouch for them) in case there are any doubts about their eligibility to register.



If the registrant appears to be younger than 18 years the Head of the registration team can ask for supporting documents or a witness.

### What documents should I bring to the registration centre?

If there is doubt about eligibility to register, the applicant will be asked to prove his/her eligibility by any official identification papers such as:

National ID card, Drivers License, Sudanese passport, Birth certificate, Military ID, Police ID, Official institution ID, Certificate from the peoples committee or from the native or local administration or traditional authority, Paper from the Nazir/ Head Chief (Sultan) or Sub Chief or Umda or Shiek bearing his signature and stamp or any paper or document issued by an official office.

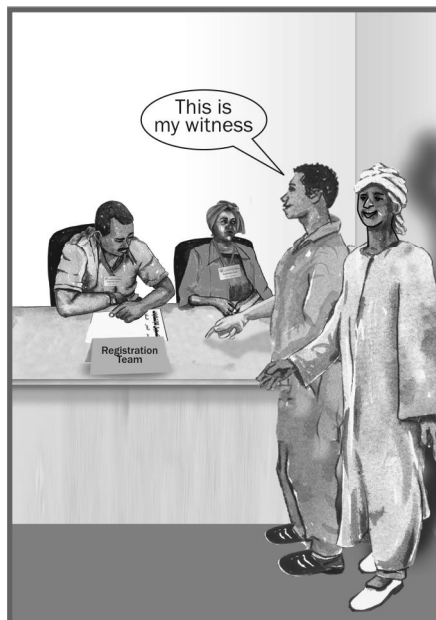


### What if I don't have identifying documents?

If an eligible voter does not have any official papers to prove his/her eligibility (citizenship, age or residence), this can be done through one of these means:

**A. Identifiers:** A registration staff member can act as an identifier if they are from the constituency area.

**B.** In a case where there are no identifiers, or they were available but could not identify the applicant, the applicant can bring a **witness**, provided that this witness is one of the following categories: Religious leader (Imam, Priest, Vicar, Minister), Umda or Sheikh or Sultan of the village; Head or member of people's committee.



### Where can I register to vote?

NEC's High Committees determine the places where persons may register. Each High Committee tries to place registration centres in areas that are closest to where most potential voters live. The exact location of the registration centres is determined and publicized by each State High Committee. Each state geographical constituency will have two or more registration centres.

### Voter Registration outside of Sudan

You can register to vote outside of Sudan at a Sudanese embassy if you hold a Sudanese passport and a valid resident visa of the country where you are. Expatriate registration enables you to vote only in the election for the President of the Republic of the Sudan.

### Can the blind register and vote?

Yes, the blind can register and vote. They will be allowed to enter the polling booth with a trusted relative (son /daughter, brother /sister, father /mother) or friend to help them to vote for the party /candidate or list of their choice.

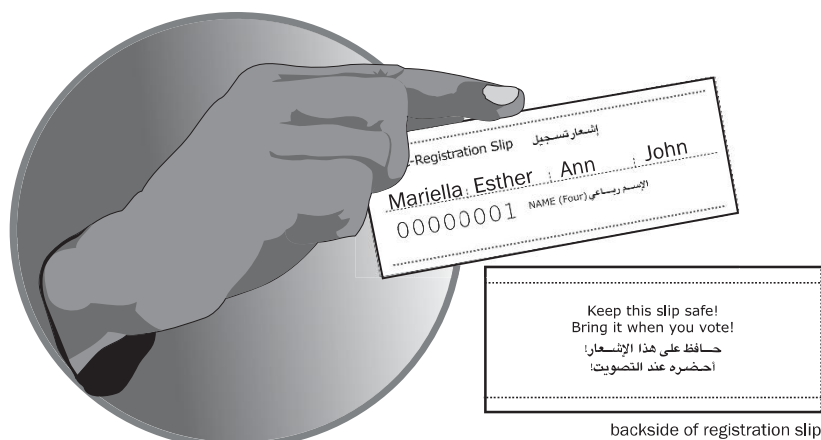


### When will voter registration start?

The exact date of the registration in each one of the registration centers will be publicly announced by the Elections Commission.

#### Keep your Voter Registration receipt!

During registration, you will be given a receipt with a number on it. This number is evidence that you have been registered and will help you find your name while checking it against the Electoral Register during Display and Objections and during Polling. **So, keep it safe!**



backside of registration slip

### Step 3: Display and Objections

At the end of the registration period, names of registered voters are displayed so that each voter can make sure his/her name is on the list. He/she can also object if there are names of persons on the list who the voter believes not to be eligible.

**A voter can object to the inclusion of another person's name on the voters' list if that person:**

Is dead, has moved to another location, is under 18 years of age, has lived in the constituency for less than 3 months, is not Sudanese, is registered in another constituency, or is not of sound mind.

## Procedures for objecting to the displayed list

- Day 1 : Public Display of the Electoral Register
- 8 days : To lodge an objection
- 5 days : Committee deals with objections
- 1 day : Publication of the amendments to the register
- 15 days : For objection to the Committee's decision
- 5 days : Amended decision by the Returning Officer
- 1 day : Publish final list



## Step 4: Nominations

During the nominations period, registered political parties or registered voters submit names of candidates for the elections to the NEC. Nominees must meet certain qualifications.

**Executive position nominees** should be Sudanese by birth, be of sound mind, be at least 40 years old, be literate, and should not have been convicted of an offence involving honesty or moral turpitude.

**Legislative seat nominees** should be Sudanese, be at least 21 years of age, be of sound mind, be literate, and not have been convicted during the seven years prior to the nomination of an offence involving honesty or moral turpitude.

In addition to basic candidate qualifications, nominees for each election must fulfill certain other requirements specific to the office for which they are standing. For example, nominees should submit a certain number of signatures of registered voters in support of their nominations. They should also pay a deposit, which is refundable if they obtain a certain number of votes or if they withdraw their nomination at least 45 days (executive elections) or 30 days (legislative elections) prior to polling. For the National Assembly legislative seats, there is the requirement that the nominee should not hold certain executive or legislative seats at the time of nomination.

Nominees for President of the Republic of Sudan and the President of Southern Sudan should also submit a signed certificate showing their financial assets and liabilities for their own, their spouse(s) and children for the year leading to the nominations. Also, all candidates and political parties contesting the elections must declare in writing that they will abide by and enforce the CPA.

Any registered political party or registered voter may nominate whomever they deem fit for an executive position or a legislative seat, provided the nominees meet the candidate qualifications specified in the National Elections Act.

For the Party List and Women's List contested seats, each party puts forward a list of candidates selected from within the party. There needs to be as many names on the list as there are seats in the Assembly allocated to the party list or women's list.

Before placing their names on the ballot, the NEC verifies that the nominees meet the legal criteria. At the close of nominations, NEC will publish a list of all nominees, including the names of persons who proposed them, the name of political party they are affiliated to, and whether they intend to contest as independent candidates. The list should be made public to all individuals and political parties mentioned in the list for them to inspect it and submit any objections or comments. This is followed by the Commission's ruling on the objections it may receive. Subsequently, a person whose nomination has been rejected, or the persons or political party(s) proposing their names may appeal to the Supreme Court (executive elections) or the court specified by the head of the National Judiciary or the Southern Sudan Supreme Court (legislative elections) against the Commission's decision. The Commission publishes the final list of candidates immediately after the courts have decided on the appeals.

## Step 5: Campaigning

During the **electoral campaign**, candidates and political parties seek to convince voters to vote for them. The NEC have set the dates for the official campaign. The campaign may commence not more than 60 and not less than 30 days before Election Day. It must end 24 hours before the Election Day.

### Campaigning Rights and Duties

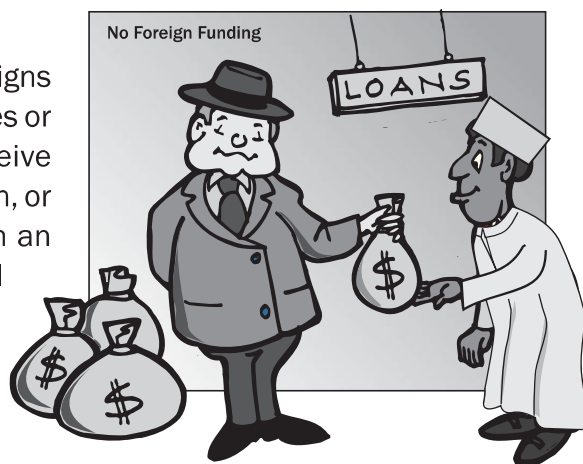
Candidates and political parties must enjoy unrestricted freedom of expression in presenting their campaign program, equal treatment by public officers and

authorities, access to all means of communication media, and equal coverage by state owned media.

Political parties or candidates should not incite disorder, insurrection or war, hatred or discrimination. Campaign materials must identify the candidate or party and include the publisher's name and address. Parties and candidates may not make statements to obstruct other campaigns. They cannot use any state resources except equal public media access.

### Campaign Finances

Political party or candidate campaigns cannot be financed by foreign countries or bodies. The campaigns may receive funding from national, Southern Sudan, or state governments, which must be on an equal basis to all parties. Political parties or candidates may collect funds from members of political parties, from candidates, and other sources that are approved by the NEC. The NEC will set specific ceilings on the campaign expenses of candidates and parties. Political parties and candidates must submit final accounts of their campaigns within 30 days of the election result. The final accounts must include funds and resources collected as well as expenditures.



### Step 6: Polling

The law provides for all citizens, without discrimination, to exercise their political rights to nominate and to freely express their will by secret ballot at periodic elections or referendum. At polling stations, trained workers are present to ensure that voting takes place in compliance with the Electoral Act. Party and candidate agents and observers can help detect potential problems, such as discrimination, intimidation or fraud.



### Timing of elections

The NEC has prepared a timeline for the electoral process and has set the period for polling. NEC may postpone any procedure of elections for any compelling reason and set a new date for conducting elections within 60 days of the original date. The NEC is also authorized to extend the period for polling by more than one day.

### Step 7: Counting

Counting of ballots will start at polling centres immediately after polling is closed and will continue until all ballots are counted. The Chief of the polling centre will declare the unofficial results and display them. Party and candidate agents present at polling centres may request a recount of the ballots or a new aggregation of the results. The Chief of polling centre may grant their request under certain conditions specified in the Elections Act.



### Basic procedures for counting

All ballots are sorted by candidate or party name and then counted. The results will be declared at the polling centre, constituency, state, Southern Sudan and the national level. The NEC will declare the election results within 30 days of the election date.

### Appeals

Candidates and parties that participated in an election have the right to submit an appeal against the results declared by the NEC. Appeals must be submitted to the Supreme Court within seven days of the NEC's declaration of results. The court will issue its ruling within two weeks, and its decision is final. NEC will publish final election results within 48 hours of the court's decision.

## Who is Watching the Process?

### Observers & Party /Candidate Agents accreditation

Accredited observers, party and candidate agents, and media representatives have access to polling and counting centres to ensure that the elections are free and fair and are held in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations. Observers are not allowed to interfere with the electoral process or to speak to voters.

### Who can observe the process?

Observers, both domestic and international, may observe the elections. These may be representatives of civil society, media, former civil servants, judges, or international organizations accredited by the NEC. Observers may be present at all stages of polling, sorting and counting of ballots, including the opening and sealing of ballot boxes at the beginning and closing of the polls.

A Code of Conduct for observers will be developed by the NEC to ensure that the behavior of observers is in accordance with international standards. NEC may revoke the accreditation of any domestic or international observer if it finds them acting in violation of the National Elections Act or other relevant rules.

Party and candidate agents may be nominated by a party or independent candidate to monitor polling and counting processes on behalf of their party or candidate. Party and candidate agents have special privileges: They have the right to submit verbal or written questions to officials and to request recounts during the counting process.



## Part 3: Conducting Civic /Voter Education

### Civic and Voter Education

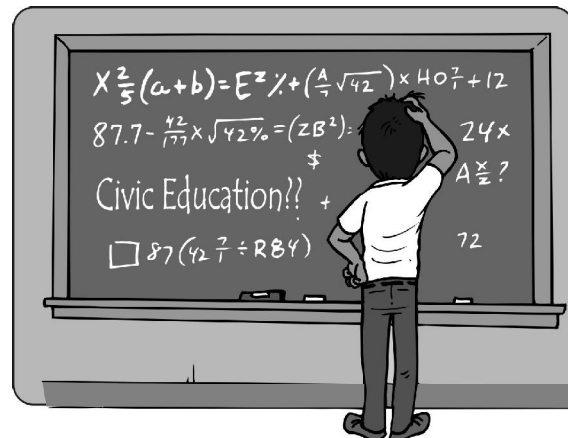
#### 1. WHY?

It is our responsibility as election educators to help the citizens of the Sudan get a clear and accurate understanding of the electoral process as specified in the National Elections Act and the NEC rules and regulations. We must encourage them to participate in the process, which belongs to all the Sudanese. Public participation will help build a stronger democracy.

#### 2. WHAT?

##### Civic Education

It is public information about important issues relating to society. It covers issues such as the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA); political and citizenship information; democracy and governance education; citizens participation; leadership qualities; gender equality; human rights education; development, social and health education and so on.



Civic Education is a critical and effective empowerment tool for promoting citizen participation in democratic and development processes. It empowers citizens, both as individuals and as part of collective groupings.



## Voter /Electoral Education

It is usually aimed at people of voting age and over. It is limited to education and information relating to the electoral process. The purpose of voter education is to connect citizens with the electoral process by promoting issues such as free choice and encouraging women, youths and special-needs groups to participate in the elections. The higher the number of participants in an election, the stronger the popular mandate of the elected government. Voter education helps safeguard freedoms!



## Civic /Voter Education Guidebook



This guidebook is focused on voter education. However, in the context of the upcoming elections in the Sudan, it is important to also look at the broader aspects such as the CPA, the Interim Constitutions and how the elections fit into the bigger picture of democracy and civil rights.

Remember that voter education is very different from campaigning! A civic/voter education officer should act impartially in passing the messages and not advocate a

certain political party or candidate. A voter educator should support the people of Sudan and educate them so they can choose by themselves.

## Stick to the facts!

If the audience tries to pull you into a political debate, remind them that this is not your interest and that you are there to inform them of the process. Furthermore, there are appeals and court processes in place for any wrong doing. We need to put faith in the legal process.



## The Core Principles of Civic /Voter Education

It is important that civil society groups follow the three main principles of civic education to ensure that they remain true to themselves and to the democratic process.

### Universality

Every eligible voter, rich or poor, young or old, male or female, and urban or rural must benefit from civic /voter education. Cast your net wide and be as inclusive as possible! Everybody wants to be part of this!

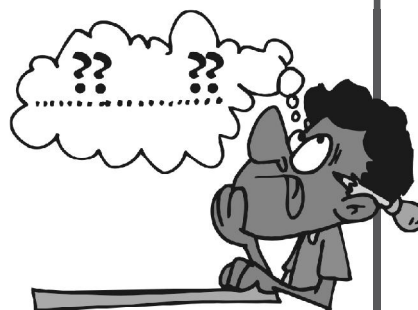


### Impartiality

It is important that civic educators remain impartial at all times. This condition is demanded and failure to comply will negatively affect future support. Information or comments should never be biased towards a certain candidate or party. It is our responsibility to just tell the facts. Impartiality will ensure that the programs remain credible and that the civil society supports the democratic process, not a preferred candidate or party!

### Clarity

The messages for any civic /voter education campaign should be clear and understandable to ordinary citizens.



### 3. WHO?

#### Know Your Target Audience

It is important to establish a target audience so that you can learn about your audience and prepare the education methods to best address them. Your approach may change depending on who the audience is.

#### Possible target groups can include:

- Civil Society Groups
- Women's groups
- Youths
- The physically impaired
- Teachers
- Media
- Tribal chiefs /elders
- Politicians, Government
- Observers
- Political party agents, Candidates
- Security Officers
- Religious leaders
- Activists
- Musicians, Artists, Performers, etc

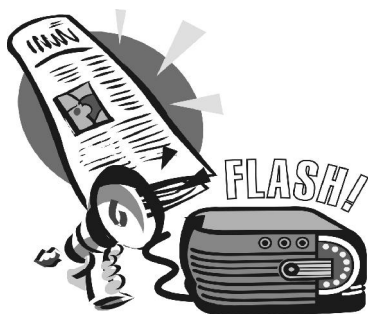


### 4. HOW?

#### Resource Assessment

You have to be able to use different means available according to the circumstances. It is important to assess the available resources when you plan and design your programs. Successful programs always take account of the context and the available material and human resources.

#### Possible civic /voter education resources:



#### Material Resources

- Public radio
- Television
- Village Meeting Halls
- Vehicles
- Media houses
- Loud speakers
- Websites – internet
- Mobile phone – sms

#### Human resources

- Facilitators
- Local chiefs
- Men/women
- Local theatre groups
- Artists
- Journalists

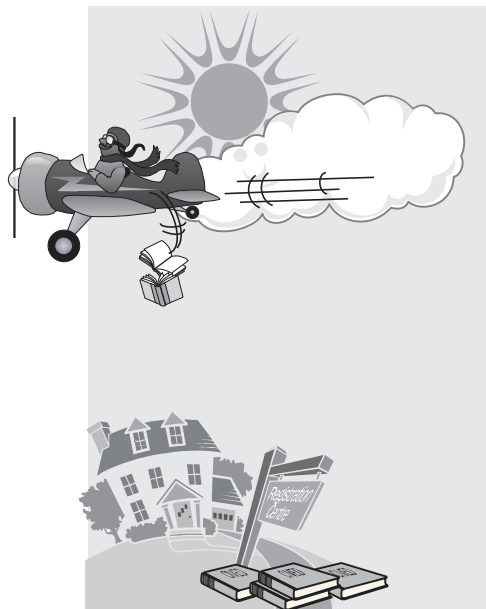
## Posters and Stickers

You may receive some posters and stickers that you are required to stick up as soon as possible. Plan ahead and make sure that you are able to divide these materials evenly among the locations that you visit. If you live in a rainy place, you will need to take this into consideration when deciding. Obviously the most visible place in the area is the best place. This may be:

- ⊕ Shop doors
- ⊕ Public walls
- ⊕ Side of buses / taxis
- ⊕ Telegraph polls
- ⊕ Market places and surroundings
- ⊕ Bus stop places
- ⊕ Near public services, where a lot of people will pass
- ⊕ Crossroads

## This Guidebook!

If you happen to also have the opportunity of disseminating this guidebook, be just as wise and plan ahead so that the geographic spread is wide. It is best to give one copy to influential people who come into contact with a lot of others. These may include community leaders, religious leaders, teachers, shop owners and others!



## Voter Education Messages

### Key Voter Education messages

#### General messages:

The following are some of the key general messages. More specific messages will be released by the NEC closer to the polling date.

- Your vote is secret
- Women have a right to vote
- One person, one vote



#### Registration Period:

These are the current messages that NEC would like promoted for the registration period:

- ☑ **TO BE ABLE TO VOTE, YOU MUST BE REGISTERED!**
- ☑ **TO BE ELIGIBLE TO REGISTER, YOU MUST BE**
  - **18 Years old by Registration**
  - **Sudanese**
  - **Live in the Constituency for 3 months minimum**
  - **Be of sound mind**
- ☑ **KEEP YOUR REGISTRATION RECEIPT!**
- ☑ **REGISTER TO VOTE FOR:**
  - **President of the Sudan**
  - **President of the Government of Southern Sudan**  
(This election is only in Southern Sudan.)
  - **State Governors**
  - **National Assembly members**
  - **Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly members**  
(This election is only in Southern Sudan!)
  - **State Legislative Assembly members**
- ☑ **Voter Registration is for elections only! You must register in order to vote. The Census was a completely different process.**
- ☑ **REGISTER IN PERSON – You cannot register anyone else, including family members.**

## What is the media's role?

### Media role

The media have an important role in educating the voters and observing the elections from an independent view point. They can help dispel fears and correct any misconception or misinformation; they can urge tolerance for different viewpoints; they can help voters understand that their preferred candidate or party may not win; they can play an important role in civic /voter education and in domestic observation.

Candidates may use public media for campaign purposes, provided that any costs are proportionate to the services rendered and provided equal coverage is given to all Political Parties and candidates equally without discrimination.



### Media violations

Media violations include: media outlets failing to inform their audience that electoral campaign material published by them has been paid for by the political parties or candidates; state-owned media not providing all candidates and parties with equal space to present their election campaigns; various actions interfering with the electoral process (e.g., removing public notices); falsification of election results; obstructing political campaigns; making false statements in order to mislead voters; making or soliciting bribes in order to influence a person's electoral behavior (offering money, gifts, employment, or contracts); and asking someone how they voted.

## PART 4 : Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. Participation Eligibility

##### **Who will /can vote in the elections?**

Only those Sudanese who have been duly registered by the NEC will /can vote in the elections.

##### **Can everyone vote in the Southern Sudan elections?**

No, only those living in Southern Sudan can vote in Southern Sudan elections.

##### **Do only women vote in the Women's List elections?**

No. Although only women are candidates, both women and men vote to elect the women candidates into the Legislative Assemblies.

##### **Will people living outside Sudan be allowed to register and vote?**

Yes, Sudanese living outside Sudan will be allowed to vote but only for the President of the Republic. To do so, they must have a valid Sudanese passport and visa for the country in which they are currently residing in order to register and vote.

##### **Will refugees be allowed to register and vote?**

No, the National Elections Act and the NEC's regulations on Voter Registration do not provide for the registration of Sudanese refugees. To be able to register and vote, refugees would have to return to their communities at least three months prior to the end of the registration process. UNMIS is working closely with UNHCR, IOM and other stakeholders to ensure that refugees who want to return home to participate in the elections are given the necessary assistance to do so.

##### **Will IDPs be allowed to register and vote?**

Yes, IDPs can register and vote where they are currently residing and can also go back to their original communities to register and vote there if they choose.

## 2. Procedural Information

### Am I also registering for the referendum?

*(If you are in Southern Sudan you may get asked this question).*

The answer is, No. The referenda for Southern Sudan and Abyei are completely different processes with special registration processes that are not organized by the NEC.

### How many ballots will there be?

Each of the executive elections (President of the Republic, President of the Government of Southern Sudan, and Governors) has one ballot. Each of the legislative elections (National Assembly, Southern Sudan Legislative Assembly and State Assemblies) has three ballots (geographical constituency candidates, Party List and Women List). There are 8 ballots in northern states of Sudan and 12 in Southern Sudan.

### If you live in northern Sudan there will be elections for:

- 1- President of the Sudan
- 1- State Governor
- 1- National Assembly, Geographical constituency
- 1- National Assembly, Women List
- 1- National Assembly, Party List
- 1- State Assembly, Geographical constituency
- 1- State Assembly, Women List
- 1- State Assembly, Party List

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## 8 Ballots



**If you live in Southern Sudan there will be elections for:**

- 1- President of the Republic of the Sudan
- 1- President of the Government of Southern Sudan
- 1- State Governor
- 1- National Assembly, Geographical constituency
- 1- National Assembly, Women List
- 1- National Assembly, Party List
- 1- Southern Sudan Assembly, Geographical constituency
- 1- Southern Sudan Assembly, Women List
- 1- Southern Sudan Assembly, Party List
- 1- State Assembly, Geographical constituency
- 1- State Assembly, Women List
- 1- State Assembly, Party List

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**12 Ballots**

**When will the elections take place?**

According to the proposed NEC electoral calendar, the general elections will be held in 2010. Depending on the need, NEC may make amendments to the calendar.

**Will people know who I vote for?**

No, every voter will cast his /her ballot in secret without writing anything on the ballot that identifies their identity. Every effort will be made to ensure that the secrecy of the ballot is protected at all times during polling and afterwards.

**Will there be security during the elections?**

Yes, throughout the process and especially on polling day security forces will be present outside polling centres to ensure that each voter casts his /her vote without threat or intimidation. UN Police are training national Police and other security forces both at the GoNU and GoSS levels on elections security to ensure that security forces act professionally during the process.



### **Where do Political Parties register?**

Any political party that wishes to engage in political activity at the national, Southern Sudan, or state level needs to register with the Political Parties Affairs Council (PPAC) in accordance with provisions of the Political Parties Act. This includes parties that wish to participate in the upcoming elections by nominating or supporting candidates.

### **If I am sick at home, can I register to vote?**

No, you have to go to the registration centre in person to be registered for the elections.

### **I have already registered with a political party. Is this enough?**

No. Registering or joining as a member of a political party is your choice. However it is different to registering on the electoral roll with the NEC. If you do not register on the NEC electoral roll, you will not be eligible to vote.

## **3. General Information**

### **What is democracy?**

The most commonly used definition of democracy is “the government of the people, by the people, for the people.” This means that any decisions taken by leaders and representatives must be in the general interest and for the benefit of the population as a whole, not in the interest of a specific group or of themselves.

### **Among the benefits of democracy:**

Citizens can influence their country's future through the choice of leaders and representatives in elections. Citizens also have the opportunity to directly influence the political life of their country through their freedom of expression and association.

The freedoms and rights of the citizens allow them to make the Government accountable. Active citizenship is the key to achieving democracy.

### **Where can people find information on the elections?**

Information on the elections and the process can be obtained from:

- NEC Headquarters in Khartoum
- Offices of NEC's High Committees at the level of Southern Sudan High Committee and the 25 states

- UNMIS EAD offices throughout Sudan
- The NEC Website: <http://nec.org.sd>



### **What is the role of the UN?**

UNMIS Elections Assistance Division is providing technical assistance to NEC to support the preparations for and conduct of General Elections in the following areas;

- Training /capacity building of electoral and polling staff
- Design and procurement of election materials
- Logistics and operational planning
- Electoral awareness /civic and voter education and
- Coordination of international assistance

### **Will elections take place in Darfur?**

Yes, the elections will take place in every part of Sudan. However, the NEC can postpone or reschedule the elections in some areas if security considerations /conditions would not allow for the holding of credible elections or would jeopardize the safety of electoral staff.

### **Will the elections be free and fair?**

The UN and the International Community are working with NEC, the Government and Civil Society to assist with the conduct of credible elections. However, the ultimate responsibility for ensuring a free and fair electoral process lies with the government, NEC and the people of Sudan.

**Who has the right to establish or join Political Parties?**

Political parties form a constitutionally essential part of a democratic system of government. Free participation in the formation of political organizations by the Sudanese people enables them to seek to realize their political goals by peaceful means. According to the Political Parties Act, any Sudanese citizen over the age of 18 has the right to found and join a political party. This right however, does not apply to active members of organized armed forces and currently serving judges /justices of the Judiciary, legal advisors in the Ministry of Justice, senior civil servants, or Ministry of Foreign Affairs diplomats.

**By registering at my present location, does it mean that I lose my right to claim property at my original place of residence?**

No. Registering now gives you the right to cast your ballot on the polling day. It does not link you to any claim of property, including land, either where you register or where you came from. The voter registration list is only used by the National Elections Commission for these elections. If you do not register now, you will not be allowed to vote in the 2010 elections.

**If I miss the registration, or decide not to register, can I still vote later on?**

You will not be able to participate in the elections planned for 2010. However, for future elections, the registration lists will be updated and you will have the opportunity to register again.