



## Together, Understanding our Constitution and Building our Nation

Information for South Sudanese Citizens  
on Constitutional Development

### Factsheet 7: Women and Constitutional Development

*This factsheet is one in a series on the constitutional development process. Factsheet 7 highlights the importance of women's participation, and specific opportunities for women to participate in developing a permanent constitution for South Sudan. Please refer to Factsheet 6 for an overview of the constitutional process and Factsheets 1, 1a and 2 for information on basic constitutional concepts.*

#### **Can women participate in the development of the permanent constitution for the Republic of South Sudan?**

Yes. The *Transitional Constitution, 2011* guarantees equal rights for men and women. Just like men, women have the right to participate in public life. It also guarantees that all citizens of South Sudan – men and women - will have the opportunity to be informed about the process and express their views about the constitution.

#### **Why is women's participation important in the constitution making?**

- The constitution is for all citizens of South Sudan – men and women, young and old. All citizens' voices need to be heard in developing the constitution.

*This Constitution is to be a document for all the people of South Sudan. The process of making the constitution, therefore, must be inclusive. Every person, regardless of ethnicity, gender, education, status or wealth, has the right to voice opinions on the text. Every person will have the right to participate in the process.*

H.E. President Salva Kiir Mayardit, January 24, 2012  
Swearing-in ceremony of the NCRC

#### **What are the guarantees for women's participation?**

- The preamble of the *Transitional Constitution, 2011* starts with "We the People..." This means all people, men and women, must uphold the constitution and participate in the development of their nation;
- Men and women of South Sudan are guaranteed equal rights and duties.
- Women are guaranteed the right to participate equally with men in public life and all levels of government are required to promote women's participation;
- *The Transitional Constitution, 2011* requires all levels of government to ensure women's representation in the executive and legislative branches by at least 25%;
- Women's organizations shall nominate delegates for appointment by the President to the National Constitutional Conference; and,
- There are currently 15 women were appointed to the National Constitutional Review Commission.

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### How did women participate in developing the *Transitional Constitution*?

- Women participated in drafting, discussing and adopting the *Transitional Constitution, 2011*; and,
- Women leaders from civil society and political parties also contributed to the discussion on rights, guarantees and powers in the *Transitional Constitution, 2011*. For example, women advocated for an increase in the 25% guarantee for women's participation in government institutions to 30%.

### “We, the People of South Sudan...”

The *Transitional Constitution, 2011* guarantees an inclusive, participatory, and transparent process to develop a permanent constitution. “We, the People...” is the first sentence in the constitution and “the People” includes all men and women of South Sudan.

#### **Women, start now to play your part:**

- Read and understand the *Transitional Constitution, 2011*;
- Talk about your views and concerns with your sisters, mothers, aunts, fathers, brothers in your organization, or in your political party, or people from the other political parties;
- Organize a civic education activity to share information about the *Transitional Constitution, 2011*, the constitutional process and women's right to participate;
- Get to know the women members of the NCRC, stay updated about the process, offer support and share your views;
- Advocate for special efforts to reach women during the nation-wide civic education campaign; and,
- If you are a member of a women's organization, talk about how you will select your nominee or nominees for the National Constitutional Conference and what support she will need to represent you and keep you informed.

#### **Men, help to encourage women in your families, communities and organizations to participate:**

- Talk with your daughters, sisters, wives, aunts and mothers about the *Transitional Constitution, 2011*
- Encourage women in your family and community to attend public meetings on the Constitution; and,
- Talk about how women will be represented in your delegation to the National Constitutional Conference – women play important roles in many organizations, not just women's organizations.