

**This document is the outcome of an ongoing initiative to build consensus around selection criteria and a women's agenda for any processes related to ceasefire, political, and peace negotiations. As of June 2025, the initiative has included an online survey with 313 respondents; extensive consultations, mappings, and online meetings with various women's groups, political parties, and movements; an in-person workshop held in Nairobi on 2–3 June 2025; and subsequent verification meetings across divides.*

Selection criteria and agenda for women's participation in peace and political processes in Sudan

Women's involvement in peacebuilding and political processes is both a fundamental right enshrined in national, regional, and international frameworks, such as UNSCR 1325, and a collective responsibility. Equal citizenship rights guarantee this participation, underscoring women's roles as essential agents of change. Their inclusion not only acknowledges their experiences as individuals affected by conflict but also enhances the legitimacy and effectiveness of inclusive processes, ensuring that they reflect the diverse realities of society. The active participation of women is indispensable in shaping just and enduring peace.

Key Principles for Women's Participation

The inclusion of women in formal and informal processes should follow a transparent, inclusive, and well-defined selection process based on specific criteria. Nominations must adhere to these criteria, promoting broad and diverse participation among women while aligning with the contextual demands of the process. Continuity and the transfer of knowledge among representatives in case of any rotation is vital to sustained engagement. Furthermore, fostering robust linkages between tracks I, II, and III is critical, with an emphasis on building supportive community constituencies, advocacy, and strengthening mechanisms for feedback and dialogue.

Criteria for Selection of Representatives

A. Formal Processes

1. Legitimacy and political balance

- Ensuring broad representation of women from political parties, major armed movements, civil society, and youth organizations, while excluding entities such as the National Congress Party (NCP) and its affiliates. Some groups may have a necessary role in ceasefire arrangements without necessarily being included in the broader political process.
- Nomination by credible civil society organizations: Candidates must be endorsed by active and reputable civil society entities.

- Commitment to equality: Candidates must be affiliated with groups that champion gender equality and actively promote women's political participation.

2. Technical and professional competence

- Representatives should possess a deep understanding of the root causes of the conflict and political and social dynamics in Sudan.
- Have negotiation skills, effective communication, and outstanding leadership abilities.
- Knowledge of regional and international frameworks such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and UNSCR 1325.
- Expertise in topics such as transitional justice, security sector reform and other areas relevant to Sudan's future negotiations.

3. Geographic and Demographic Representation

- Strive towards a balance between states/regions, taking into account affirmative action for the states most affected by war and developmental marginalization between women in Sudan and abroad.
- Ensure the inclusion of women of different ages and socio-economic backgrounds.
- Inclusion of women with disabilities.

B. Informal Processes

1. Knowledge of the context and ability to communicate and influence women and mediators in tracks I, II and III.
2. Full commitment to participation in all stages of the process.
3. Ability to build constituencies and to communicate and interact with different women's groups throughout the process
4. Broad representation of civil society and grassroots organizations through consultations with multiple groups of rural, urban, informal and entrepreneurial women.

Criteria for Selecting Nominators and entities

1. Representation of political parties, major armed movements, active women's and youth groups should be ensured, and representative from ongoing and relevant informal and formal processes (to ensure sufficient synergies between the multiple tracks).
2. Nominators should have full commitment to supporting women's issues and broad political participation;

3. commitment to transparency and accountability at all stages of nominations, and;
4. commitment to international standards, frameworks and conventions that stipulate the direct and effective participation of women in peace and political processes.

Additional Considerations

1. While selection criteria may vary depending on the format of the process, the basic principles of inclusion, diversity and legitimacy should remain constant.
2. Not every woman is expected to meet all the criteria; instead, the criteria should reflect a range of perspectives and experiences that must be represented, and women may participate in different positions – as gender experts, political actors, grassroots leader etc.
3. In the context of the national dialogue in Sudan, a system of proportional representation could be explored to ensure broad inclusion.
4. It is essential that women collectively support women selected to participate, contributing to effective information-sharing and feedback mechanisms throughout the process.

Sudanese Women's Agenda

1. Ensuring a minimum of 40% effective political participation

- In **ceasefire negotiation and political processes** at all levels and phases, through a range of integration mechanisms including quotas, direct participation, consultations and/or advisory bodies;
- In **all structures of mediation and negotiation**, including in General Secretariats, technical teams, media and information- and other relevant committees;
- In the **constitution-making process** at all stages and in all bodies;
- In all **governance structures** resulting from the political process;
- In reforming and/or rebuilding the **security sector**;
- In **legislative reform and policies**, especially legislation that discriminate against women;
- In the **leadership of political parties**, armed movements and civil society organisations.
- In the **implementation, monitoring and evaluation** of peace agreements and political agreements.

2. Safeguards and Protection

- **Develop clear policies and mechanisms** to protect women activists in public life from all types of violence.
- **Develop mechanisms to protect humanitarian workers** and medical staff.
- **Strengthen protection measures** against all forms of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence and ensure survivor-centred response mechanisms.
- **Ensure accessible and gender-responsive mental health, psychosocial, and reproductive health services** for women and girls affected by conflict, including survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, as a core component of peacemaking, peacebuilding and recovery efforts.
- **Signing and ratification of all international and regional conventions** related to women, including UNSCR 1325 and other relevant resolutions.
- **Establishment of monitoring and accountability mechanisms** for gender commitments in peace agreements.
- Establishment of centres for the protection of civilians, especially women in conflict zones.
- **Promote environmental protection and climate justice** by ensuring that women's voices are central in environmental decision-making, addressing the gendered impacts of environmental degradation and conflict, and securing equitable access to natural resources and sustainable livelihoods in Sudan.

3. Accountability

- **Integrate gender-sensitive approaches across all transitional justice mechanisms** (truth commissions, reparations, prosecutions, and institutional reforms), ensuring the recognition of gendered harms and the active participation of women and survivors in design, implementation, and oversight.

4. Economic Empowerment and Recovery

- **Access to livelihoods**, financial resources, and land ownership rights, particularly for women in the agricultural and pastoral sectors, the private sector, the informal sector, rural areas, and displaced communities.
- **Ensuring food security for all Sudanese**, with special attention to the needs of women and children affected by conflict, displacement, and economic instability.
- **Ensuring the provision of financing opportunities** for women entrepreneurs by increasing the total financing portfolio of each microfinance bank by 12% to women, youth, and graduates, as stipulated in the Bank of Sudan's policies.
- **Allocating a portion of the general budget** from national revenues to finance women's political and economic activities and establishing a national fund for women's economic empowerment.

